"THE HUNT"

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at http://archiveofourown.org/works/6217276.

Rating:	Explicit
Archive Warning:	Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	Hannibal (TV)
Relationships:	Will Graham/Hannibal Lecter, Will Graham & Hannibal Lecter
Characters:	Will Graham, Hannibal Lecter, Beverly Katz, Abel Gideon, Matthew Brown (Hannibal), Jack Crawford, OCs
Additional Tags:	Kidnapping, Violence, Minor Character Death, Threats of Rape/Non-Con, Bottom Will, Top Hannibal, Eventual Smut, Animal Kink-but not really, Profanity
Language:	English
Series:	Part 1 of "THE HUNT"
Collections:	Hannibal Rereads
Stats:	Published: 2016-03-11 Completed: 2016-03-17 Words: 24,302 Chapters: 12/12

"THE HUNT"

by EvilAdmin

Summary

Will is abducted and taken to a private island where he and other captives are to be turned loose and hunted by an exclusive group of killers who pay for the privilege of hunting “the most dangerous game.” Among the hunters is the apex predator himself, Hannibal Lecter.

Notes

“The Hunt” is loosely based on a concept from a 1932 movie I have always loved called "The Most Dangerous Game." I hope you enjoy my story as much as I have enjoyed all the stories on Archive. This is my very first fanfic, so be gentle with me. ;)

Chapter 1

Hannibal Lecter was sitting at his desk scanning the "Personals" section of *Tattlecrime.com* on his iPad looking for a very specific ad, an ad that appeared here every year on May 1st, although the wording always varied. He knew the key word that would appear in the title of the ad and he quickly skimmed over and dismissed ads such as "Clean, sexy guy seeking a hottie for dirty fun," and "Horney meet and greet," and "Park your mouth on my …" Hannibal skimmed faster. People never ceased to amaze him with their pathetic attempts at connections. Ah, finally, here was the ad he was looking for: "*Hunting for that special someone? We've got what you're looking for."* Hannibal read through the rest of the ad and deciphered the coded message within. The code would be a website address that would take him to a webpage detailing this year's Hunt.

He typed the web address into his tablet and took a sip of wine as the website loaded. He glanced quickly through the contents and smiled. Yes, they had some wonderful participants planned for the Hunt this year.

The website was fairly simple. It had a pretentious blood red background and in bold white lettering gave the date of the Hunt (June 1-3, one month away); the time; the location to arrive at in order to be picked up by a private plane that would take the hunters to a secluded island off the coast of Cuba; the price of admission ($100,000); and information where to transfer funds to a bank in the Cayman Islands. Then below that were pictures of the people they were planning to have as participants (albeit unwilling ones) for the Hunt. Below each picture was the participant's name, age, height, weight, and a snippet of background information. The pictures currently included one New York street cop, a Chicago rookie cop, one Seattle precinct captain, several young men from the military, including one Green Beret and one Special Forces, a martial arts instructor, a triathlon contender, and on and on, including three attractive women, one of which was a long distance runner.

Although most hunters preferred hunting men because they were physically stronger and faster, Hannibal knew some of his fellow hunters were sexual predators who enjoyed raping and murdering their victims, so management of the Hunt always made sure to throw a few attractive women into the mix, although it was not unheard of for the occasional man to be found dead with his pants around his ankles.

Twenty-three pictures in total. The quality of the participants this year was outstanding. He wasn't surprised. Last year he and several other hunters had complained about the lack of quality of the participants. They just weren't challenging enough: too easy to catch, even easier to kill. Well this year they were certainly making up for it.

Hannibal already has his eye on Daniel Richmond, the Green Beret—26 years old, 230 pounds, six foot three inches of solid muscle. Oh, yes, this was exactly the type Hannibal liked to hunt and bring down. The picture of Daniel appeared to be a shot taken from a long-range camera that showed him in uniform looking relaxed, exuding the kind of confidence that says, "Yes, I'm that good." He would be a worthy opponent. Hannibal smiled and

licked his lips in anticipation. He would do a thorough web search on Daniel and some of the others who looked promising when he had more time.

Hannibal had been attending the annual Hunt ever since he found out about it four years ago when Joseph Everett, a new patient he was treating, turned out to be an undiagnosed psychopath and had mentioned the Hunt to Hannibal—bragged about it actually—feeling secure in the fact that Hannibal could never speak of it due to doctor-patient confidentiality. Hannibal had questioned him about it in the guise of a concerned doctor, but he had been very excited after hearing the man's description of it and how to find the invitation in *Tattlecrime.com* (it was always on May 1st, always in the Personals, and always would have the word 'hunt' in the title) as well as the key to deciphering it.

Shortly thereafter the man had been gunned down by the FBI after being caught red-handed, quite literally, with his latest victim. Hannibal had been relieved because he didn't want to participate in the Hunt with anyone who lived in the same town and knew who he was. Hannibal had actually been wondering how he could tip off the FBI to the man's identity, but the FBI had beat him to it.

The Hunt was limited to 30 hunters and 30 participants, providing a 1:1 ratio and giving everyone a chance for a kill. Thirty hunters at $100,000 brought in a tidy $3 million to management of the Hunt. What Hannibal liked most about the Hunt though was that the hunters and prey alike were turned loose in the jungle on even footing. No weapons of any kind were permitted, only your brains, will, ingenuity and, of course, savagery.

Hannibal scrolled to the bottom of the website and leaned forward suddenly, his interest peaked. It seemed that management had added a new twist this year. With 23 pictures currently on the website, that left 7 spaces without pictures. For the 7 remaining spots management was asking if the hunters would like to purchase a spot for a specially selected participant of the hunter's choosing for an additional $25,000.

Hmm, nice touch, Hannibal thought. He sat back in his chair and thought about this for a moment with his fingertips steepled in front of him. There was a fascinating, very intriguing, very smart FBI consultant who was getting a little too close for comfort to his alter ego, the Chesapeake Ripper. This consultant was actually instrumental in the discovery and death of Joseph Everett, his former patient. Hannibal had thought about killing this young man himself, but he didn't like killing people he had associations with, and he had actually met and worked alongside Will Graham on a few occasions.

Hannibal had met Will for the first time in Jack Crawford's office when Jack had asked them both to provide a profile on a case where eight teenage girls with very similar looks had disappeared without a trace, presumed to be dead. Will Graham had given his observations first, and Hannibal had been stunned and fascinated at how this seemingly shy young man had looked at the evidence and seemed to embody the mind of the killer. He started ticking off points, from the killer's motive, to how he was choosing these particular girls, to why no parts of the girls were ever found. And he used the word "killer," not "abductor" because he stated unequivocally that the girls were dead. Less than 48 hours after that, Hannibal was with Will when he figured out that Garrett Jacob Hobbs was the "Minnesota Shrike" and shot

him dead in his own home. It was one of the most surprising and unexpectedly enjoyable days of Hannibal's life.

If Hannibal was being totally honest, he also had to admit to a slight stirring of physical attraction to Will during the same case when he had arrived at Will's hotel room early that same morning to bring him breakfast and try to get him to open up a little bit, and Will had answered the door half asleep with mussed hair wearing a t-shirt, boxer shorts, and a grumpy attitude that he had found surprisingly endearing. Hannibal had tried to ignore these particular feelings, as they were decidedly inconvenient and could never go anywhere, but they kept tapping him on the shoulder at unexpected times and saying things like, *Doesn't he look cute when he's trying to hide behind his glasses?* or *Doesn't he look delectable covered in Garrett Jacob Hobbs' blood?* Hannibal had actually become aroused when he had walked into the Hobbs' kitchen with the smell of gunpowder in the air, Garrett Jacob Hobbs' bullet-riddled body leaning up against the kitchen cabinets, Abigail Hobbs bleeding out all over the floor, and Will covered in blood. He's had had a brief mental flash of throwing Will down on that bloody floor and taking him. He'd had to pause in the doorway a few seconds to regain his composure. Fortunately Will had been too upset at the time to notice anything amiss.

Hannibal shook his head. He was getting distracted even thinking about Will and he could feel his body starting to stir. This could never go anywhere, even if Will was interested, which he didn't seem to be. He had actually told Hannibal to his face he didn't find him that interesting.

Jack Crawford had tried to get Will to submit to therapy with Hannibal after that case to make sure Will was stable, but after Hannibal had "rubber stamped" him hoping to get him to relax and gain his trust, Will had never come back for therapy saying he didn't like anybody inside his head. It was a shame really because Hannibal had been considering trying out some rather unorthodox methods to study the remarkable mind of Will Graham. After that Hannibal would sometimes see Will at crime scenes when asked by Jack Crawford to consult on cases with the FBI, and the young man was consistently a source of fascination. He had never seen anyone's mind work the way Will's did. Will could read a murder scene the way an architect could read blueprints. He was *too* good at reading murder scenes and, by association, murderers.

Hannibal had actually heard Will profile the Chesapeake Ripper/himself. He described the Ripper as, "In his thirties or forties. He has some sort of medical training. He's got real physical strength combined with an older man's self-control. He's cautious, precise, and he's never impulsive. He'll never stop. He's got a real taste for it. He regards his victims as no better than pigs, he abhors rudeness, and many of his kills are acts of humiliation for the victims."

Yes, Will was dangerous. He would eventually figure out who the Ripper was, it was just a matter of when. But now it seemed that providence had given him a solution to his problem. He smiled as he checked the box indicating he would like to purchase a spot for a specially selected participant, and then typed in: "Will Graham. Lives in Wolf Trap, Virginia. Works for FBI, Quantico, Virginia." He then attached a picture of Will from a recent *Tattlecrime.com* article and hit the send button. He took another sip of his wine and smiled. This would be a very interesting hunt indeed.

* * *

May 16th

Will Graham and Beverly Katz were exiting *The Bang-Bang Bar*, a local bar where a lot of the FBI crowd hung out. Will normally avoided going to places where he needed to be "sociable," but Bev had talked him into it after a particularly long day at a particularly gruesome crime scene that had left him feeling tightly wound and on edge. He usually refrained from going out with any of his co-workers, but Bev was one of the few people that Will felt comfortable being around. She would always do most of the talking, which took the pressure off him to talk, and some of the stories she told about life with her six brothers had him laughing so hard he could barely catch his breath, and it felt really good to laugh.

At about 9:00 he decided to call it a night. He needed to get home and take care of his dogs. He had installed a doggy door into the back door of his cabin so the dogs could go in and out freely to use the bathroom or stretch their legs, but he still needed to get home and feed them. He had their homemade food already prepared in the refrigerator; it just needed to be warmed up.

Bev decided to call it a night as well and they left the bar together headed out to the parking lot and their respective cars. It was in the 60's and the air was cool and crisp, and when Will looked up there were millions of stars visible in the sky. He smiled because he loved nights like this. He was just about to point out the night sky to Bev when he felt a sting in his left shoulder. He looked over at Bev to ask her if she'd take a look and see if a bee or something was on his jacket when he saw a tranq dart sticking out of her shoulder and a perplexed look on her face, and then her eyes rolled back and she started falling. Will's mind started to go into panic mode but was quickly swallowed up by the darkness. He didn't even feel it when his face hit the blacktop of the parking lot, nor the hands that grabbed him and loaded him into a waiting van.

Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

> I got more hits on my first chapter than I expected, so thank you to everyone who gave it a chance, and a big thank you to everyone who gave me Kudos, and a super big thank you to those of you who left comments.

Hannibal had been checking the Hunt's website every day for updates since the day he had signed up. He was waiting to see if/when Will's picture would appear. There had been no news on *Tattlecrime.com* about Will being kidnapped, but then the FBI would hardly want word of a missing agent to leak out.

Finally on May 18th, there it was. It was a nice shot of Will that must have been taken while he was home. It was a head and shoulders shot and there was a lake behind him. He wasn't wearing his glasses and he looked younger, more innocent. Hannibal smiled. Then his eyebrows shot up when he noticed the next picture, that of Beverly Katz. Now that was unexpected. Did some other hunter sign up Ms. Katz, or was she simply in the wrong place at the wrong time? Whatever the reason, thinking about the woman and what he knew about her she would be a worthy addition to the Hunt. Her job title guaranteed she wasn't squeamish, he knew her to be above average in intelligence, she seemed to be a bit protective when it came to Will, and Will would also be protective of her. This year's Hunt was just getting better and better.

* * *

Will opened his eyes slowly. They felt heavy and gritty. He rubbed them and tried to clear his vision. He couldn't remember having any nightmares last night, which was rare. Had he actually gotten a good night's sleep for a change? He looked to the side to check his clock to see what time it was while trying to remember what day of the week it was. If it was Saturday maybe he could just lay here a while longer. However, there was no clock. Adrenalin slammed into his body as he realized he was in unfamiliar surroundings, and then the memory of the tranq dart hitting him came flooding back. And then Beverly. Where was Beverly?

He sat up quickly and looked around, but he was alone in a room maybe 10 feet square, solid stone, no windows, one metal door with a sliding panel which was currently shut, a sink, toilet, the small cot he was sitting on, and nothing else. He was basically in some sort of prison cell.

He stood up planning to go to the door and bang on it but got hit with a wave of nausea that had him sitting back down quickly. He also noticed a strange chemical taste in his mouth. He got up more slowly this time and went to the sink instead, turning on the cold water and

putting his mouth below the faucet to get a drink, and then splashing some water on his face to help clear his mind. Feeling a little bit better, he went over to the door and banged on it with his fist. He wanted to know who had kidnapped him and why, and he also wanted to know if they had taken Bev or had left her in the parking lot. Will sincerely hoped that he was their target and that they had just tranqed Bev and left her. However, after banging steadily and shouting out for over five minutes until his fist and throat felt raw, nobody came to the door. He went back to the sink and drank some more water, realizing how thirsty he was. He also realized how hungry he was when his stomach gave a loud rumble. He rubbed his stomach and realized it felt flatter than usual.

Jesus, how long have I been unconscious? Have I been unconscious for more than a few hours? It was an unsettling thought. What was also unsettling was the fact that he was now wearing different clothes. His jacket, shirt and jeans had been replaced with a simple black t-shirt, black cotton pants with an elastic waistband, black socks, and black slip-on, rubber soled shoes. The thought that someone had undressed him made his anxiety level shoot up a couple more notches. Plus, that also meant they had his wallet, his FBI badge, and his gun.

Finally after sitting on his cot for a couple of hours and having his repeated attempts at banging on the door and calling out go unanswered, he heard the door to his cell being unlocked. He stood up, bracing himself, having no idea what would be coming through the door. A big man wearing all black, including a black ski mask, entered first with an equally big gun and motioned for Will to stand against the back wall. After Will's back was against the wall the man motioned to a second man, identically dressed, who entered behind him with a food tray and set it on the cot. After depositing the tray, the second man left and the first man with the gun started backing out, still aiming the gun at Will. They hadn't said a word.

"Wait," Will protested, "what's going on? Why am I here? My friend who was with me, is she here?" But they just slammed the metal door and he heard the heavy lock slip into place.

Will was good at taking information and sifting through it and coming up with theories, but he had no information to sift through. He had absolutely no clue who had taken him or why. He supposed it might be related to one of the cases he had recently worked on. And lord knows Freddie Lounds kept featuring him in articles in her rag. Will sighed. He just had nothing to go on yet.

He sat down on the cot and looked at the food. It looked surprising tasty. There was roast beef and mashed potatoes with gravy and a vegetable medley and a warm dinner roll with butter and a chilled glass of orange juice. As much as he wanted to throw the tray across the room, he was starving. He picked up the orange juice first and took a sip. The taste of chilled, fresh squeezed orange juice exploded across his taste buds and he found himself quickly draining half of it. He supposed the food or juice could be drugged, but he didn't think so. He'd been drugged when he got here, apparently for quite some time, and they could have kept him drugged if they had wanted. No, whoever had kidnapped him wanted him fully awake now, and they apparently didn't want him to starve to death. He ate most of what was on his plate and waited for his kidnapper to declare him or herself. But no one came, not that day or the next. Just the two men dressed in black who delivered food three times a day.

On the fourth day they took him out of his cell and brought him to a room that looked like a small prison shower with multiple shower heads attached to the walls. The guy with the gun told Will in as few words as possible he had 15 minutes to shower and pointed at a towel and a clean set of clothes, identical to the ones he was wearing, that were sitting on a counter. Then the man stepped out of the room and closed the door. Again, there were no windows and the only door was the one he just came through. Will sighed, and after doing a quick scan for cameras and not seeing any, he began to strip. He definitely was getting ripe and could use a shower. The only thing new he had learned was that his guard had some sort of an accent, but he couldn't place it.

Will tapped on the door when he had finished showering and dressing, and his guard opened it and motioned him out with the gun that seemed to be permanently attached to his hands. Will once again tried asking his guards questions, but they continued to keep silent as they led him back to his cell.

This routine would continue on for the next 11 days with Will not learning anything new about why he was here or who had kidnapped him. He was so frustrated he considering trying something desperate, like attacking the guards.

But then two days later things changed. They took him for a shower only two days after his previous one, and when he looked at the stack of clothes on the counter it was his own jeans, shirt and jacket with his FBI badge laying on top.

"Put those on after you shower, and make sure your badge is visible," barked his guard.

He went to his clothes and multiple emotions washed over him. These clothes reminded him of home, of his dogs, his job, everything he'd been missing while being here. The clothes looked and smelled freshly laundered. Of course his gun was missing. *Well*, he thought, *whatever is happening looks like it's happening soon. Hopefully I'll finally get some answers.*

After he showered and dressed the guards led him down a hall in the opposite direction of his cell, and Will was sure he was right and that he was finally being taken to meet the brains behind his abduction and get some answers. He still hadn't come up with any theories as to who would have wanted to bring him here, wherever here was.

They were headed toward a set of heavy, swinging double doors, and when the guards pushed him through the doors Will froze, trying to process the overload of information he was seeing. He was suddenly standing in a large, beautiful ballroom with expensive looking wallpaper and high ceilings with fancy chandeliers. There were round tables set up with fine linen, sparking crystal and fancy plates with flower arrangements in the middle of each table. It was like being in the banquet ball of a five-star hotel like the Marriott or the Waldorf. That is if it weren't for the cages with people in them on three sides of the room.

Chapter 3

Will's heart started pounding in his chest. What in the bloody hell was this? Why were there people in cages? Then Will heard a familiar voice yell out, "Will!" It was Beverly and she was in one of the cages. His heart sank. He was hoping she was safe back home, but at least she was alive. The two guards prodded him toward the cage Beverly was in, which happened to be the last cage at the end of the row, and then shoved him in.

Bev wrapped her arms around Will and both of them said at the same time, "Are you all right?" They both smiled at that, the tension easing slightly. Will started to question Bev about what had happened to her since the night they were taken, but he spotted a middle-aged, portly gentleman dressed in a black suit with a bowtie and slicked back thinning hair stepping onto the center of a large elevated stage that was on the fourth side of the room. The man walked up to a standing microphone and started to speak in an amplified voice.

"Now that everyone is here I'm sure you're all wondering what's going on. Let me try to answer all of your questions now. First off, you may call me Mr. Smith, though that is not my name …"

Duh, really? Will thought. Will also noted that Mr. Smith had the same accent as his guard.

"… and I am the host for this year's Hunt."

Will heard smatterings of "Huh?" "What did he say?" "Did he say hunt?"

"You should all be honored to have been chosen because only the finest are chosen to participate in the annual Hunt."

Will looked around and saw the confusion and uneasiness he felt reflected on the faces of his fellow captives.

"The Hunt is a two-day event hosted by management each year for an elite group of hunters who truly appreciate the challenge of hunting the most dangerous game."

At this Mr. Smith smiled and held his hands out to indicate the people in the cages.

"This is an unusual hunt because hunters and prey both start off on equal footing with neither having any weapons, only the clothes on their backs, and using their wits and skill to either kill or be killed, survive or die."

Louder muttering from the captives and one of the women started sobbing.

"You are currently on an island outside the United States' jurisdiction that is roughly 40 square miles in size, or approximately the same size as Disney World," Mr. Smith said with that annoying smile again.

Will felt a stab of panic at being told they were no longer in the United States.

“There are no boats or planes currently located on the island; therefore, there is no way off. Day 1 of the Hunt will commence at 7:00 tomorrow morning and end at 6:00 tomorrow night. You will all be given a watch that will alarm at 6:00 p.m., letting you know when the time is up. At that point everyone will be gathered up and brought back here for food, rest, and medical treatment, if needed. For those of you that survive the first day, the second day will follow the same routine. If at the end of the second day you manage to still be alive, you have my word you will be returned back to where you were taken. This should give you the proper incentive to try and do your best.”

The blowhard unbelievably gives a cheeky wink after this statement.

“Our clientele want only the finest and fittest specimens to hunt. Some of you are from the military or law enforcement, some are athletes, and some of you were chosen for your more esthetic qualities,” he says, gesturing at two women in cages directly across from Will.

Will suddenly realized why he had been given his own clothes back for tonight. Everyone in the cages must be wearing what they were wearing when they were taken. Will can clearly see by what they are wearing who are with the military, who are police, and who look like athletes. Will’s own guard had told him to make sure his FBI badge was visible.

Mr. Smith continued. “Management takes great pride in obtaining and providing the hunters with a wide assortment of prey to satisfy the most discriminating of tastes and to enhance their hunting enjoyment.”

“How many motherfucking hunters we talkin’ about here?,” yells out a man down Will’s row that he can’t see.

“Ah,” Mr. Smith says, “you’ll have the answer to that soon enough. You see, we’re having a little banquet for the hunters in about 15 minutes. They will be here for an evening of wining and dining and getting reacquainted with old friends, and of course they’ll want to see you all up close and personal. So try to be on your best behavior …”

“Fuck that!,” someone else yelled out, and then the room erupted with everyone shouting out various opinions on that, some having to do with the sexual preferences of Mr. Smith’s mother.

“SILENCE!” Mr. Smith boomed, all joviality suddenly gone. “While management expects and appreciates a bit of spirit, we will not tolerate the kind of out-of-control, poor mannered display I just witnessed. Such conduct will not be tolerated, and if such occurs again there will be consequences. Just so we’re completely on the same page, those who wish to test our limits will be tasered and left to spend the evening out cold at the bottom of their cages with no food or water. Those of you who are smart will want to engage the hunters, talk to them, try to suss out any weaknesses they may have. If you’re smart you’ll scout them every bit as much as they’ll be scouting you.”

As much as Will dislikes Mr. Smith, he definitely sees the logic in his words. There is no escaping these cages so far as he can tell, and there are armed guards around the room even if you could escape, so best to make the most of a bad situation. If what Mr. Smith said is true and they somehow survive the next two days, they could be released. Looking around at his

fellow captives Will felt somewhat optimistic. I mean, there are military men here and cops, both who have been trained to fight. Will's not sure if he believes Mr. Smith or not, but it's something to hope for. Still …

"How many have survived?" Will asked in his quiet voice.

"What?" Mr. Smith asks.

Will spoke louder and the room fell silent. "I asked how many people have survived the Hunt and been freed?" Will held his breath fearing he already knew the answer.

"To date, none have survived," said Mr. Smith with a slight smirk on his face. The room erupted again. Will wanted to smack that smirk right off his face. It made sense though. If anyone in the past had survived the Hunt and been returned, the story would have been all over the news. Shit, this was about the worst situation he had ever been in. What Will didn't know is the evening was about to get a whole lot worse.

* * *

After Mr. Smith finished his little speech and managed to quiet everyone down, Will was asking Bev questions about her experience. Then a different set of doors to the ballroom opened and the presumed hunters entered the room. The cages all fell silent as the participants observed the people who would, as of tomorrow, be trying to kill them.

Will had done a quick count of the cages and knew there were 30 cages in the ballroom, all holding one person each with the exception of his and Bev's cage. Looking at the hunters there appeared to be an equal number, so most likely they had kidnapped one person for each hunter.

The hunters were a mixed bunch. Looking at the ones he could see, some dressed to the hilt in tuxedos, some were wearing casual polo shirts and dockers like they were going out to play 18 holes of golf. One guy looked exactly like that Darryl guy from *Walking Dead* complete with the long bangs and the vest with angel wings on the back over a sleeveless shirt that showed off his impressive biceps, and yet another wore faded jeans with a huge belt buckle and a cowboy hat and cowboy boots. So many different types of hunters, so many different types of killers.

The hunters were glancing around the room, their body language showing excitement and anticipation. Waiters in tuxedos suddenly appeared and started moving around the room with trays of hors d'oeuvres and flutes of what appeared to be champagne.

Mr. Smith had gone back to the microphone as the hunters entered the room and said, "Welcome, welcome to this year's Hunt. We believe this year will surpass all previous hunts. The feedback we received from last year's Hunt said you wanted more challenging prey, so management has spared no expense in bringing you the absolute best to make this year's Hunt the highlight of your year. In addition to that, we added a new feature this year that allowed you to choose a participant of your own to add to the Hunt. I must say there was an overwhelming response to that, so thank you to those of you who entered a name, and I'm sure that this will be a regular feature from now on."

Wait, what? Will thought. *Some of these hunters had actually submitted names of people they wanted placed in the Hunt?* He suddenly had a bad feeling. Will knew he didn't look like anybody's idea of a "superior specimen." He wasn't big or muscular or tough looking, so he had been wondering why he was chosen for the Hunt. I mean, he did work for the FBI, but they could have chosen someone much more suited to this than him. There were guys at the FBI that knew how to kill a guy 50 different ways with a pencil.

He supposed Beverly could have been the intended target and he had been taken just because he was with her. Glancing over at her she was every bit as attractive as those girls in the cages across from him. Plus, if he was being honest, she was probably tougher than him. Will sighed. He was starting to get a stress headache. He hoped this "viewing" wasn't going to take long because he'd like nothing better than to be back in his cell lying on his cot with his eyes closed. He never thought he'd be happy to be back in his cell, but right now that was preferable to this.

Mr. Smith went on, speaking to the hunters: "If you'll all grab a seat I'd like to introduce you to this year's lineup of participants."

Will saw one of the guards in black walking around with a portable camera, and as Mr. Smith introduced each of the participants in turn, the camera would focus on that person and project it onto a big screen above Mr. Smith's head.

It was fascinating as Mr. Smith introduced each one and read the high points of their lives and accomplishments. Mr. Smith also made mention if that particular participant had been entered by one of the hunters. There was a girl there by the name of Trisha O'Malley who was announced as being one of the hunter-chosen. She was a 19-year-old college student, the only child of a Miami police commissioner. Miami had been the home of a serial killer of late known as the Bay Harbor Butcher and the Miami police were said to have been closing in on him. Will remembered reading that Trisha had disappeared several days before he and Bev were taken, and the police commissioner had fallen apart. The papers said right after Trisha disappeared he and his wife started getting cryptic notes and calls from someone claiming to be the Butcher saying things like it was their fault their daughter was going to die screaming. So Will assumed that the Butcher was one of the hunters here and had entered poor Trisha.

Trisha wasn't handling the stress very well. When the camera showcased her she had tears trailing down her face and her nose was running and she was calling out to anyone who would listen that her parents would pay whatever ransom they wanted if they just released her. Will felt sorry for her but thought she would find no sympathy in this crowd.

As the camera panned to the other participants some of the people just looked stonily at the camera, a few gave a nice one-fingered salute with a few choice words, and one girl turned her back and refused to turn around. When it came to Bev's turn she stood tall with her arms crossed in front of her, hiding her fear well. When Mr. Smith read her impressive credentials, especially with regards to the FBI, she received quite a number of appraising looks from hunters.

Then finally it was Will's turn, and oh how he dreaded this. After waiting and wanting to get this over with as quickly as possible, of course he was the very last one featured and he had

worked himself into a bundle of nerves. He wanted to stand up straight and look as relaxed like Beverly had, but he was so awkward in social situations, so uncomfortable being the center of attention like this that he just ducked his head down, clasped his hands in front of him nervously and fidgeted the whole time. Although he was sure Mr. Smith's recitation of him was the same length as the others, it seemed like it took forever for him to finish.

Mr. Smith named off every single killer that Will had been instrumental in helping the FBI catch, finishing up with the fact that Will had shot and killed Garrett Jacob Hobbs himself. They had certainly done their homework.

Will glanced up once briefly into the ballroom and saw every eye trained on him with expressions ranging from curiosity to calculation to hatred and everything in-between. He was being bombarded by all these emotions from killers and it was overloading his senses. He could feel his breathing pick up and he squeezed his hands together tighter to stop the shaking. Finally, *finally* Mr. Smith concluded by saying what Will already suspected, that Will was one of the hunter-chosen participants.

After the camera was off him Bev moved toward him, rubbing his back and trying to calm him. He took deep breaths trying to get his breathing back under control. Mr. Smith then announced that dinner would be served in 20 minutes and that the hunters were free to get up and walk around the room and examine their prey. This was just getting better by the minute.

Chapter 4

Chapter Notes

> Happy Saturday, everyone. I reached 100 Kudos this morning and I am thrilled! So happy so many of you are enjoying my story. As it is the weekend I am posting this next chapter earlier in the day than usual. I really like this chapter and hope you enjoy it. For all you Bev fans out there, I have a scene where Bev gets really fiesty that I think you'll enjoy. I'll post another chapter tomorrow.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The hunters started circling the room and looking at the participants like animals at the zoo. Some asked questions of the participants, some made antagonizing or disparaging comments, and, of course, several of the participants fired back some very colorful responses. There was a New York cop two cages down from Will that had a vocabulary of colorful insults that Will marveled at because he had never heard most of those phrases before. At one point he heard this cop say to one of the hunters, "It looks to me like the best part of you ran down the crack of your mama's ass and ended up as a brown stain on the mattress!" Wow. You gotta love New Yorkers.

At one point Will actually got a shock when Abel Gideon walked up to his cage with a young man who looked familiar. Abel had escaped from the Baltimore State Hospital for the Criminally Insane around six months ago and had disappeared without a trace, yet here he was now.

"Hello, Mr. Graham, it's nice to see you again. "Ms. Katz, we haven't had the pleasure of meeting before today, but I'm sure you're familiar with my work," Dr. Gideon said pleasantly.

"Unfortunately, I'm intimately familiar with your work, Dr. Gideon, as I was one of the ones who autopsied your wife and her family," Bev shot back frowning.

Gideon just smiled and said, "It's always nice to make an impression."

"Dr. Gideon, we haven't seen you in a while," Will said. "Where have you been keeping yourself?"

"Oh, you know, Mr. Graham, can't stay in one place too long. Have things to do, places to go, people to kill."

Will had been studying Dr. Gideon's companion. "Don't I know you?"

"Oh, this is Matthew Brown, one of the attendants at the Baltimore State Hospital. This is his first Hunt and I'm just showing him the ropes."

Okay, Will could picture him now at the hospital. He had been the attendant who had always taken Will to Dr. Gideon when he went there to conduct interviews with him.

“You’re a killer?” Will asked Matthew incredulously.

“Newly born, and this is like a convention for killers. I’m meeting all the key players and learning tricks of the trade, and tomorrow I get to go out and test my skills. Hope to see you out there tomorrow … Will.”

Will wondered if Matthew helped Dr. Gideon escape, maybe looking for a mentor. Will definitely didn't like the way Matthew was staring at him.

“Anyway,” Dr. Gideon, says, “we must be moving on. So much to see, so little time. See you tomorrow, Mr. Graham, Ms. Katz. It should be fun.” And off they went with Matthew Brown looking like a kid in a candy store.

As the minutes rolled by Will realized with a growing sense of unease that he and Bev were getting a great deal of attention. Well, to be honest, it was actually mostly Bev. Will looked over at her and viewed her the way these killers must be viewing her and realized with dawning realization that Bev was actually very beautiful. He guessed he’d never really noticed because he’d only had eyes for Alana, not that Alana seemed to share those feelings. Aside from being beautiful, Bev was keeping her head high and not showing any signs of intimidation. He could suddenly see why she was getting so much attention. To some of these men that liked to generate fear in women, that would be like waving a red cape in front of a bull.

Will and Bev took it all in stride, ignoring the comments, and Will tried to use his empathy to get a sense of each hunter that passed by, although it was making his head throb. There was one man in particular that gave Will the creeps. He identified himself braggingly as Chester Davis, aka The Blade. Will knew about him, of course; he was on the FBI’s most wanted list. He was a sexual predator that worked the San Bernardino, California area. He was called The Blade because he raped women and then shoved some type of thin long sword up inside them to kill them. Right now he was just standing there eyeing both him and Bev and giving them both the creeps.

Then someone unexpected appeared at their cage that shocked them both.

“Dr. Lecter?,” Will and Beverly said at exactly the same time.

“Will, Ms. Katz, nice to see you both looking so well.”

“What are you doing here, Dr. Lecter?” Beverly asked.

But Will had gone still and Hannibal could see the pieces falling into place behind those brilliant eyes.

“He’s the Chesapeake Ripper, Bev,” Will said with more calm than he felt.

“What? He can’t be. He’s worked cases with the FBI for Christ’s sake.”

“Think about it, Bev. He used to be a surgeon, he’s intelligent, he lives alone, has his own practice so he has flexible hours. Why didn’t I see it before now?”

“You were certainly getting close, Will, which is why I signed you up for the Hunt.”

“*You* signed me up. What about Bev?”

“I suspect she was taken simply because she was with you when they decided to strike.”

Will nodded. He had considered that. “So, now you’re going to kill me,” Will stated flatly.

“Honestly, you’re not one of my top three choices; however, if we happen to cross paths I suppose it would be too much of a temptation to just let you go.”

“Well,” Chester Davis interrupted still ogling them uncomfortably, “they’re both a couple of real lookers, that’s for sure. I’ll certainly be looking for you, honey,” he said to Bev. Then he turned his attention to Will and said, “I only tried a man once before and it was okay. His asshole was so tight I was chafed for a week, but it might be worth it for one as pretty as you. Look at that pretty mouth, bet it’d look great around my cock.”

Seeing Hannibal frowning Chester said, “Oh, come on, don’t tell me you haven’t thought about it. If you didn’t want to fuck him why’d you have him brought here? Why didn’t you just kill him back home?”

Will looked a little startled by that, but at this point Bev had had enough. She saw how upset Will was getting and her protective instincts kicked in. “Hey!” she said to the Chester. “Yeah, you, swizzle dick. Why don’t you move on and give some of these other assholes a chance to ogle and insult us.”

“Swizzle dick!,” the man spluttered, red crawling up his neck. “I’ll show you swizzle dick.” And before anyone knew what he was going to do, he had unzipped his pants and had said swizzle dick in his hands waving it in Beverly’s direction. The ballroom had suddenly gone totally silent and every eye was suddenly turned their way trying to get a glimpse of the drama playing out.

Oh, no he did not, Beverly thought. Beverly’s FBI training had taught her a thing or two about sexual predators and what made them tick, and by the look of things this particular man seemed to be getting off by both Beverly and Will’s initial stunned expressions and by the attention he was suddenly getting from everyone in the room. His dick, which was limp when he pulled it out, was suddenly at half-mast. Well, Bev would fix that. She dropped her arms to her sides and sauntered slowly toward the man, holding eye contact the entire way. When she was about a foot away from the bars she slowly looked down at the man’s dick. She tilted her head to the right, then tilted it to the left like she was giving it her full consideration.

“So, what do you think, sweetheart?” Chester said, obviously thrilled at having Bev’s full attention.

Bev looked up at the man who was now licking his lips and breathing heavy. The whole room seemed to hold its breath in anticipation.

“Hmm,” she said, “it looks like a penis, only smaller.” Her voice seemed to echo around the room, and after two seconds of stunned silence the whole room erupted into laughter and catcalls and insults, all at the man’s expense, especially from the people in cages. The people in cages nearest to them were actually chanting “Swiz-zel dick! Swiz-zel dick! The colorful New York cop seemed to be leading the chant”

Will dipped his eyes briefly and saw that Beverly had completely “unmanned" Chester with that one sentence. Even Hannibal seemed to be trying to hold back a smile. Will was extremely proud of Beverly at that moment.

Of course Chester was furious now at being made a fool of. Beverly jumped back as his arm came through the bars of their cage trying to reach her, calling her every name he could come up with with spittle flying from his lips. “You fucking cunt, you bitch, you whore, you dike. You’re going to die screaming! I’m gonna split you open like a turkey on Thanksgiving,” and he went on and on with a seemingly endless supply of increasingly disturbing insults.

Will saw Mr. Smith motioning a couple of the guards to no doubt collect the man and try to diffuse the situation, but before they could reach him Hannibal suddenly stepped behind Chester and with a single quick motion and a loud crack broke the man's neck. The room went quiet once again.

“Oh, no-no-no,” exclaimed Mr. Smith, running up behind the guards. “Dr. Lecter, this is simply not done. You know the rules: No killing except during hunting hours. I’ve afraid there will have to be a rather large financial penalty for this infraction, sir.”

Hannibal bowed his head slightly and said, “I understand, and I do beg management’s forgiveness. I happen to be acquainted with these two and Mr. Davis was being exceedingly rude. I will, of course, accept whatever penalty management deems fit.”

Mr. Smith seemed appeased by that and motioned for the guards to drag off the now deceased Mr. Davis.

Will looked up at Hannibal’s calm expression while Hannibal merely straightened his cuff-links like nothing out of the ordinary had happened. Will was visibly shaken by the ease with which Dr. Lecter had snapped the man’s neck, and now that same man along with 29 … well, 28 others would be hunting them tomorrow. Will felt suddenly sick to his stomach.

“I’m sure you know by now, Will, after studying so many of my kills, how much I detest rudeness.”

Will nodded slightly, not meeting the man’s eyes. He had figured that out, but seeing it happen in person was another thing entirely.

Just then a bell sounded indicating dinner was about to be served. Looking between both Will and Beverly Hannibal said, “Good luck to you both tomorrow. Try to stay alive; I wouldn’t want you to die too soon.” Then with a slight nod he turned and walked away.

Will and Beverly watched the guards dragging Chester Davis' body away. Bev was standing next to Will and leaned her head toward him and said, "Let me get this straight. Dr. Lecter has no problem with us being killed by these people but he won't tolerate them being rude to us?"

Will just shook his head and shrugged. Sometimes there are just no words.

"Fuck," Beverly said.

Yep, Will thought, *that about summed it up.*

Chapter End Notes

Note: I have to give credit where credit is due. Bev's comment, "it looks like a penis, only smaller," is from the movie Pink Cadillac starring Clint Eastwood and Bernadette Peters. Bernadette delivers the line flawlessly to a man who walks up and flashes her. I've always wanted to find a reason to use that line, so now I have.

Chapter 5

The Hunt - Day 1

The next morning Will's guards woke him up at 5:30 for breakfast. Afterward he was led to the showers and given the black t-shirt, pants, socks and slip on rubber soles shoes again. At a quarter to 7:00 the guards led him outside where his eyes were having a hard time adjusting to the brightness of the sun coming up on the horizon. He hadn't seen the sun for almost two weeks now and it felt really good to be outside. The hunters were all lined up to one side wearing the exact same clothes as the participants except theirs were in camouflage colors of greens and browns whereas the participants were all in black. At least it would be easy to tell friend from foe. Everyone's was wearing the standard watch, which would alarm at 6:00, announcing the end of the Hunt for the day.

As Mr. Smith had said, there were no weapons to be seen, except for the ones the guards held.

At five minutes to seven Mr. Smith arrived and announced that there were caches of bottled water and food stuffs interspersed throughout the island and marked with red flags. No doubt this was to keep people moving through the jungle and not just hiding. Will could already tell that it was going to be a hot day, and with all the running they would be doing they would need the water badly.

"You'll have a 20 minute head start before the hunters head out," Mr. Smith announced. "Good luck to you all, and may only the strongest and fittest of you survive."

The participants were spaced out in a large circle formation in a clearing facing the jungle and told that when they hear the signal to run straight ahead. No doubt this was to spread them out and keep them from banding together. Will immediately went over to where Beverly was standing and was surprised when no one tried to separate them. They both had a better chance of staying alive if they were together. Will glanced over and spotted Hannibal Lecter, but Hannibal seemed to be focusing his attention on a really tall, muscular man that Will seemed to recall is a Green Beret. Will actually felt relieved that Hannibal wasn't focused on him or Bev. He'd seen enough of the Ripper's kills to know how ruthless he can be. *This young Green Beret is an imposing figure. Maybe if I'm lucky Hannibal Lecter will be dead by the end of the day,* Will thinks.

The signal sounded and off they ran.

* * *

By the end of Day 1 of the Hunt 17 participants and 12 hunters were dead, counting the one Dr. Lecter had dispatched the day before. This was an actual record for hunter deaths. That left 18 hunters and 13 participants still breathing, though some of them were wounded.

As soon as 6:00 alarmed on everyone's watches, guards appeared throughout the island to gather everyone up and lead them back to the facility. Will spotted cameras throughout the

jungle and knew they were being watched.

The surviving participants were given medical treatment, if needed, by a doctor who couldn't speak English that was on standby for anyone sustaining injuries. This was only allowed after 6:00 when the Hunt ended. If you sustained an injury during the Hunt, you had to figure out a way to survive with the injury until the Hunt was officially over for the day. Injured or not, you still had to participate in Day 2.

The participants not needing medical attention were taken immediately to the showers and given dress clothes to wear. Will was surprised to see the tux that awaited him in the shower room. He put the tux on but refused to wear the tie, leaving the top button open. When he was escorted once again to the double doors of the ballroom, the other participants were already there, the men all in tuxes and the two remaining women dressed in floor length gowns. Will closed his eyes briefly, overcome with emotion when he saw that Beverly was one of the two. He had gotten separated from Bev around midday when two hunters attacked them simultaneously and they had split up.

Bev was dressed in a long midnight blue dress that had a kind of shimmer to it that hugged her curves, had a low décolleté, and a high split up the left side that revealed her full leg with every move she made. She looked stunning except for the bruises on her upper arms where someone had obviously grabbed her, and the split lip. Will quickly scanned the faces of the remaining participants looking for the big Green Beret that Hannibal Lecter had been eyeing, but he was not there. He had really been hoping the big man would have prevailed.

They were led through the double doors to the same ballroom, but they were not ushered into the cages. Mr. Smith came toward the group and told them they were free to eat and drink and sit wherever they wanted. The participants all looked a bit confused. The hunters were already there eating at various tables.

"What, you don't expect us to hobnob with these assholes, do you?" the yet alive New Yorker asked. "That'll happen when a zebra drives a sports car out of my sphincter."

There were long tables set up in front of the stage where food was set up buffet style. There was a man in a chef's hat stationed behind one table carving up ham on the bone and roast beef, veal and lamb. There were also green, leafy salads, potatoes cooked a variety of different ways, buttered peas, fresh corn, warm rolls, and a fresh fruit salad. In addition, there was a wine table and a dessert table set up. Whoever management was, they certainly didn't skimp on anything.

Will was actually starving so he lightly took Bev's arm and led her over to where the plates were. He decided on some ham and sweet potatoes, a small amount of peas, a roll and some fruit. He didn't want to eat a heavy meal with his life hanging in the balance tomorrow.

He spotted Hannibal sitting at a table by himself and headed toward it. He tried to get Bev to come with him but she refused to go with him, clearly thinking he was crazy. She went over to where the other participants seemed to be congregating. He passed one table and noticed that Abel Gideon and Matthew Brown had both survived.

Will walked up to Hannibal's table and said, "May I join you?"

“Please,” Hannibal politely responded. “Wine?”

“I’m actually more of a whiskey sort a guy,” Will replied.

“I’m sure they can accommodate you.” He motioned for one of the ever present waiters to come over and asked for a whiskey for Will.

“You didn’t have to do that.”

“It was no bother at all. I’m happy to see you survived the first day, Will. I admit I had my doubts. Perhaps having Ms. Katz fighting alongside you made a difference?”

“Perhaps,” Will said noncommittally. “I see you survived as well.”

“This is my fourth hunt, Will, and I always indulge myself to the fullest. If I died on this island tomorrow I would die a happy man.”

Will just shook his head. When he looked over at Hannibal’s plate he noticed that Hannibal had chosen the lamb. Figures.

After a couple minutes of silent eating Hannibal said, “What’s on your mind, Will?”

Will set his fork down. “I just don’t see how I missed it. You were right there under my nose and yet I never suspected you. Now that I know I just can’t figure out why I never stopped to consider that you fit the profile.”

“In your defense, Will, I worked very hard to blind you.”

Will started to say something, but they were interrupted by Mr. Smith once more on stage at the microphone saying, “Congratulations to all of you who survived today. I must say it was a most thrilling day, and per our usual custom management is proud to show the highlights of today’s Hunt.”

Will noticed Hannibal smiling. “Show what?” he asked.

“Oh, it’s highlights of the best kills today. They have cameras set up all over the island recording everything, and then management selects what they consider the best moments from the day and show it as part of the evening’s entertainment.”

“You have got to be kidding me. That is just sick!”

“My dear Will, if you don’t want to watch you can turn your back to it.”

But Will knew he couldn’t because just hearing what was going on would fuel his imagination to come up with images as bad, or even worse, than what was on the screen.

The first clip they showed was announced as *The First Kill of the Day*. A man named Tobias Budge had come across an unsuspecting man who had just found a food and water spot, and while he was grabbing a bottle of water Tobias crept up behind him with a length of vine and

strangled him. There was appreciative applause from the hunters. Will felt queasy and took a large gulp of his whiskey.

The next clip was *The Fastest Kill*. One of the killers (Will couldn't remember his name) had a big flat stone in his hand and was hiding behind a tree. When the unsuspecting participant ran by the tree the hunter sprang out and smashed the stone straight into his face. Instant death. More applause from the hunters, another gulp of whiskey for Will. He saw Hannibal motioning a server to get him another. Will wasn't arguing. And on and on the clips went: *Most Bloody* (arterial blood spurting everywhere), *The Biggest Turnaround* (where it looked like one person was going to win, then ended up losing). The clips so far were all kills the hunters had made.

Then Mr. Smith announced *Most Surprising Kill*. The opening shot showed 19-year-old Trisha O'Malley (the Miami Police commissioner's daughter) slowly limping across an empty clearing surrounded by jungle. She walked slowly and painfully like she had sprained her ankle. Out of the trees came Charles Rutherford, one of the sexual predators. The look on his face said it was Christmas and Trisha was his present.

Hannibal looked down at the table like he was bored. He hated watching the sexual predators doing their kills. However, when he glanced over at Will to see how he was doing he noticed that Will was suddenly holding himself very stiff. This was interesting. Was he simply worried about Trisha or was it something else? Hannibal turned his focus back to the screen.

Trisha was backing away from Charles Rutherford and tearfully pleading for him not to hurt her. She suddenly tripped on some sort of branch and fell backwards onto her butt. Charles was about to pounce, but then movement from both sides of the screen caught Hannibal's eye. Beverly came out from the left swinging her right arm and lobbed a large stone underhanded girl's softball-style that hit Charles on the side of his head. As soon as the stone hit, Trisha jumped up on two perfectly good ankles, picked up the branch she had supposedly tripped over, which apparently was just a prop, and hit him in the back so that he went down on his knees. Will, in the meantime, had been racing over from the right. Will lifted his foot and put it on Charles' chest and pushed hard enough so that he fell on his back. Then with a long stick he had with a freshly broken, sharp end he stabbed it right through one of Charles' eyes and into his brain. Charles died not knowing what hit him. It was so brilliantly set up and happened so fast that people sat there stunned at first; then there was enthusiastic applause from the participants. Bev, who was sitting with the other participants, was getting a lot of praise, and that New York cop was patting her on the back.

Hannibal looked over at Will, who was blushing furiously and would not meet his eyes.

"That was extremely well done, Will, bravo. Was it your idea?"

"It was a collaborative effort," Will mumbled.

Hannibal doubted it very much but let it drop. "I don't see Ms. O'Malley here now," he observed.

“We ran into another pair of killers unexpectedly and told her to run. We didn’t see her after that,” Will said sadly.

After several more highlights of kills made by both participants and hunters, including one surprising kill where one hunter killed another while fighting over a participant, Mr. Smith said, “And now for our last clip, we have management’s pick for *Best Kill of the Day*.”

Hannibal already knew what kill was going to be shown next. His battle with Daniel Richmond had been exceptional. They were evenly matched in most respects, Daniel being a bit younger with more stamina and Hannibal being older with more experience. It had all come down to who wanted it more and how far they were willing to go to get it.

Hannibal angled his body so that he could watch Will’s expression throughout the fight.

Will stared at the screen the way people stare at a car crash on the interstate, with a kind of sick, twisted fascination. In the beginning he could see the confidence on Daniel’s face. The young man really thought he could take Hannibal. But as the minutes ticked by and Hannibal continued to press and chip away at him, the young man’s confidence started to falter. He knew he was in trouble. Hannibal would patiently wait for an opening and then strike, gradually wearing Daniel down with powerful jabs and punches and kicks. Daniel would occasionally land a good punch of his own, but it wasn’t enough. He was steadily losing ground. It was painful to watch. Will could see Daniel was weakening. His breathing was more labored and his reaction time was getting slower. The fight lasted a good 10 minutes and ended when Hannibal finally found the opening he was waiting for and punched Daniel in the throat. When Daniel went to his knees trying desperately to breathe, Hannibal forced Daniel’s head back and put his hands into Daniel’s mouth between his teeth and split his jaws open with an audible ripping-cracking sound. Then while the man was dying in a thrashing, noisy fashion, Hannibal pushed his hand up through the man’s skin under his rib cage and pulled out his heart and took a bite.

“The man had had the heart of a lion and it deserved to be consumed and honored,” Hannibal said quietly to Will. All the killers gave Hannibal a loud standing ovation, which he acknowledged by standing and raising his wine glass to them.

“If you’ll excuse me, Doctor Lecter, I’m going to go join Bev now,” Will said softly with a tremor in his voice.

Will looked positively green to Hannibal. His reactions throughout the fight would be something that Hannibal would store in his memory palace and replay in his mind over and over.

Smiling, Hannibal said, “I’ll see you tomorrow, Will. I’m quite looking forward to it.” Then softer for Will’s ears only, “What part of you shall I eat, I wonder?”

Will walked away without responding and shivered despite himself.

Chapter 6

The Hunt – Day 2

Day 2 followed the same procedure as Day 1. Will was awoken at 5:30, given breakfast, taken to the shower, given a clean set of black clothing, then taken outside. There were considerably less participants today and he automatically headed toward Beverly, but one of the guards pointed him toward the opposite side of the clearing. Apparently they were going to split them up today and Will felt anxious about that. He looked over at the hunters and froze when he saw Dr. Lecter staring right at him.

Shit! It looks like he's got me in his crosshairs today, Will thought. Well, he would just have to stay ahead of him. He would have a 20 minute head start and would do his best to try and lose him. He could do this, he could survive until 6:00 p.m. He just needed to try and find Beverly because she needed to survive as well.

The signal sounded and Will took off, running at a steady pace. His plan was to run straight ahead until he was out of sight of the clearing and then turn left and start curving back in the direction where Beverly was. With any luck she would have the same idea and start running to her right. Of course she could also run left and they'd never meet up, but it was the only thing Will could come up with. He hadn't had a chance to try and signal her. Bev was only here because she was with him, and he felt a need to try and protect her. If she died and he lived he would never be able to live down the guilt.

Keeping an eye on his watch he noted when it was 7:20 and the hunters would be turned loose. He tightened up with apprehension but forced himself to relax. He just needed to keep his eyes sharp and his ears open. He also hoped he came across some water because he could tell it was going to be another scorcher today. It already felt like it was in the high 70s and it was still early in the day.

* * *

Will alternated between running and walking over the course of the day. He kept to his plan of circling back to where Bev might be, but he never ran into her. Thankfully he did come across one of the food and water caches and grabbed a bottle of water and a power bar without incident. It was starting to get late and he was beginning to feel confident that he was going to get off this island alive. Glancing down at his watch it was 5:25. If he could just survive another 35 minutes he'd be home free. Feeling that surge of confidence, he let down his guard and wasn't paying attention for a second, and that's when someone jumped right into his path.

He had been running at the time and his momentum didn't allow him to stop in time. He tried to stop but slid in the loose sandy soil, arms pinwheeling trying to keep his balance and ended up falling on his ass. He jumped up as fast as he could and tried to run back the way he came, but he was grabbed from behind around the throat, and suddenly he couldn't breathe. He tried elbowing the guy in the ribs, he tried stamping on his foot, kicking, but this

guy's grip was like iron and Will's vision was starting to fade. It looked like he was going to die on this island after all.

Then suddenly he felt the man jerk sharply behind him and his grip loosened. Will managed to push the arm away, and when he turned around he saw the man who was strangling him was being similarly choked by someone else. It was Hannibal. Hannibal Lecter had found him. Will watched transfixed as Hannibal seemed to be taking pleasure from killing this other man. He was rubbing his nose against the man's purpling face almost in an affectionate manner with his eyes closed. Then Hannibal opened those eyes and looked right at Will and smiled.

Will turned and took off running, his heart hammering in his chest. He hoped that being smaller and lighter than Hannibal would give him an advantage running through the dense jungle foliage. He heard Hannibal crashing through the jungle behind him. Will tried to pick up speed but Hannibal was gaining on him. Will felt him right on his heels, and then he was tackled from behind and landed so hard on his chest that the air was knocked out of him and he couldn't breathe.

Hannibal scrambled up Will's body and flipped him over onto his back. Then he sat on Will's lower body and grabbed his wrists and pinned them on either side of Will's head, effectively trapping him. Will struggled, trying to free himself while Hannibal just stared at him as if he was a curious bug. Will was pissed. Back home he had failed to recognize Hannibal Lecter as the Chesapeake Ripper when he was right under his nose, and now to add insult to injury the Ripper had had him kidnapped and brought to this blasted island, and now had him pinned down and helpless and was about to kill him.

"Well, what are you waiting for!" he said angrily.

Hannibal slowly lowered his head towards Will. Will turned his head away, then realized he was exposing his neck by doing this. Will started thrashing his head back and forth. If Hannibal was planning to rip his throat out he wouldn't make it easy for him.

Hannibal switched both of Will's wrists into one hand, his long fingers easily wrapping around them both, and held them down above Will's head. Then he grabbed Will's jaw hard with the other hand and forced it to the side. His head lowered toward Will's neck. Will struggled as hard as he could while bracing himself for the feel of teeth on his jugular. Will felt Hannibal's lips touch his neck and he tensed, preparing himself for the pain. He was breathing hard and it still felt like he couldn't get enough oxygen. He waited. And then he felt Hannibal run his nose up his neck and inhale deeply before pulling away.

What the ... ? "Did you just smell me?" Will asked.

"I did."

"Why?"

"People are a lot like wine. The grapes wines are made from are influenced by the soil they're grown in and by the air. Maturity can also change the taste. The taste of a Bordeaux from the Left Bank changes as the wine matures in the bottle. With time, the initial primary

fruit-driven scents and flavors fade and are replaced by secondary or tertiary flavors and aromas. These secondary aromas, also known as the bouquet, offer intriguing notes of tobacco leaf, truffle, smoke, flowers, honey, spices, wet earth, forest floor or leafy aromas. With more time, the darker fruits you initially sensed morph into dark cherry flavors. The texture of the wine as it ages changes as well. Mature Bordeaux wine becomes more elegant, silky, and can feel like velvet on your palate. People are the same. Where they live, what they eat, what they put on their bodies, their health, their maturity all affect how they smell and taste. With you, Will, I first smell the scent of your shampoo, the soap you bathed with, the laundry detergent used to wash your clothes, sweat … and blood?

"I ran across a couple bodies. I checked to make sure they were dead."

"I see. Underneath that is a secondary scent of the woods you live near, your dogs, motor oil, fish, and remnants of that awful aftershave you insist on wearing. And then further down still I smell adrenaline, anxiety, and your own unique pheromones, which is quite pleasant. They all combine to make a scent that is unique to you and you alone. If you were in a crowded room and I was blindfolded I could still pick you out."

Okay, this was just weird and disturbing. Will still wasn't sure where this was going. Was he smelling him to see if he would be tasty enough to eat after he killed him? He just wished he'd get off him because he was really heavy. Will tried rocking his body to see if he could dislodge him, but he couldn't budge him.

Hannibal starred down at Will, his mind divided. The logical part of his brain was saying "Just kill him now and get it over with." The other side of his brain was saying, "You have a unique opportunity here that you never would have had back home in Baltimore. You have Will Graham writhing underneath you, pinned down and helpless. Indulge a little," it pushed.

Hannibal had just killed another predator for daring to touch Will. Will was his by right. To the victor go the spoils. Surely he deserved a small boon for saving Will's life, even if he was thinking about killing him himself. Besides, the friction from Will struggling beneath him was starting to have an effect on Hannibal.

Hannibal leaned forward toward Will's face again. He was still holding his jaw in his hand, but now he was holding Will's face straight toward him, lowering his lips to his.

Oh, shit, he's going to eat my mouth! Will thought panicked.

Will tried to turn his head but Hannibal's grip was like iron, and then Hannibal's lips were on Will's stiff, literally gob smacked mouth, and he was kissing him.

Will froze. His brain had locked up. Hannibal Lecter, the Chesapeake Ripper, was kissing him? No-no-no, this wasn't happening. This-was-so-not-happening. There's no way he had a man kissing him. Correction, there's no way he had a man who is a known serial killer kissing him. Correction again, there's no way he had a man who is a known serial killer who has eaten people with that mouth kissing him.

Hannibal broke the kiss and looked down at Will. Just as he thought, Will was looking at him like he had no clue what just happened. How could someone so brilliant be so utterly clueless sometimes?

Hannibal had made small overtures towards Will from time to time whenever they worked a crime scene together. There would be a small innocuous touch here, a brush of the shoulder there, a slight invasion of his personal space to look at a clue at a crime scene—nothing that would be obvious to anyone watching them. He then would gauge Will for a reaction, but Will always seemed oblivious to what he was doing.

Hannibal knew Will's uniqueness set him apart from others, isolated him. Hannibal could sense his loneliness and had thought that perhaps he might be receptive to Hannibal's overtures. He had even invited Will over for dinner a couple of times, but Will had politely declined, making excuses that he had to get home to feed the dogs, or he had papers to grade. If Will was aware of Hannibal's interest, which he didn't seem to be because he never tried to avoid him, he never let on.

The kiss basically decided it for Hannibal. He had sampled those lips and he wanted to do it again. He could indulge for a bit and still kill Will before the Hunt ended. He bent down and kissed Will again, this time grazing Will's lips with his tongue.

Will was about to have a full blown panic attack. Hannibal Lecter, serial killer extraordinaire, was … making out with him? Did he just fall through a rabbit hole into an alternative universe or something? He started struggling harder. He did not want this, HE-DID-NOT-WANT-THIS! … until … (vroosh, vroosh) … the pendulum swung and all of a sudden his fucking empathy kicked into high gear and decided to throw its two cents' worth in.

Chapter 7

Will's mind is suddenly bombarded with different emotions. He recognizes remotely that some of them are his own emotions and they're conflicting with Hannibal's, but even Hannibal's emotions are conflicted. He feels heat and desire, longing and hope, but he also feels fear, uncertainty and mistrust. Underneath all that he feels a longing to connect with someone on intellectual, emotional and physical levels, but he's not sure whether that's Hannibal or himself feeling this.

Will can hear warning bells ringing in the back recesses of his mind, but it's like the buzzing of mosquitoes, annoying but easy enough to ignore. He's feeling a touch of vertigo from all the different emotions bombarding him at the same time and feeling slightly queasy from it, so he decides to just focus on the strongest emotions and tune the others out. Heat, passion, lust and desire are at the forefront now. Suddenly Hannibal's lips on his own aren't repulsive any longer; in fact, they feel quite nice. Objectively speaking Will has always thought Hannibal was good looking for a man, although he dressed a little pompously. And lord knows he has that great hair that's always perfect, unlike Will's unruly mess.

Jesus, Hannibal is a really good kisser. Will is also now enjoying the weight of Hannibal's heavy chest against his own. Will wants to touch Hannibal but Hannibal still has his arms pinned above his head. He tries struggling, but that has no effect on Hannibal. Will is suddenly feeling hot, restless. He wants more. He decides to try relaxing his body and parting his lips so Hannibal can deepen the kiss.

Hannibal feels Will's body language change and instantly pulls away, suspicious of what that means. He looks at Will's now lust-glazed eyes and shakes his head as understanding hits him. It's just too perfect. Will is feeding off of Hannibal's own emotions right now and will give himself to Hannibal freely. Of all the scenarios that had run through Hannibal's mind he had never even considered that this was a possibility. Hannibal smiles widely. Very soon Will would be his mind, body and soul.

Hannibal releases Will's wrists and puts his left arm under the back of Will's neck so that Will's head is slightly bent back and he's looking up at Hannibal through those ridiculous lashes of his. Then he runs his right hand through Will's hair. He's always wanted to touch those soft looking curls. He angles Will's face and bends down and kisses him again, this time feeling Will groan and respond back in kind. Hannibal deepens the kiss and teases Will's tongue with his own, no longer afraid that Will will try and bite it off. The kissing is getting demanding, hungry, hot and slippery. Will actually starts sucking on Hannibal's tongue, sending an instant erotic shock straight to Hannibal's groin. Hannibal's breathing quickens.

Will puts his arms around Hannibal as soon as they are free and snake them under Hannibal's t-shirt. Will is panting now and stroking Hannibal's back. He throws back his head exposing his neck, no longer afraid Hannibal will rip it out. Hannibal starts kissing Will's neck and Will breaks out in goosebumps as he feels the exquisite scrape of Hannibal's five o'clock shadow on his throat. It feels so damn erotic. Hannibal kisses and licks and sucks Will's

neck until Will is writhing and moaning out loud. Will wraps his legs around Hannibal and starts moving against him, seeking friction.

Hannibal needs to get Will out of these clothes. He needs to see him fully naked, have full access to his body. Hannibal sits up and starts pushing Will's t-shirt up, and Will accommodates him by raising his upper body slightly off the ground. Hannibal thne removes his own shirt and tosses it aside as well. Hannibal takes in the smooth, hairless chest with just a little dark hair trailing from Will's navel down below the waistband of his pants. Hannibal touches and strokes and bends his head to lick and suckle Will's nipples, and then trails his tongue lower and dips and swirls it in Will's navel which gets him a satisfactory response as Will gasps and arches his back.

While still touching and stroking, trying to keep physical contact with Will lest he snap out of the spell he is currently under, Hannibal puts his hand under Will's left hip and rolls him over in one quick movement, placing his left arm under Will's stomach so he can then lift Will to his knees. Hannibal nudges Will's thighs farther apart and runs his right hand down the middle of Will's now sweat soaked back, down, down the center of his ass and then under and up, sliding his hand over the front of Will's pants and his very hard erection. As he rubs Will, Hannibal presses his nose in the material covering Will's ass and inhales deeply. The scent of Will's arousal and the gasp Will suddenly makes nearly strips Hannibal of his remaining control. Then Will turns his head over his shoulder and looks Hannibal straight in the eyes with a heated gaze and brings his tongue out to wet his lips slowly in the most provocative, most carnal way Hannibal has ever seen anyone do before. Hannibal's whole body catches fire, consumed in the heat of Will's gaze.

Now! It has to be now, Hannibal thinks, trying to maintain control. He feels himself trembling slightly like his first time at 16 when he had sex with one of his teachers in Paris. That time he was so nervous and excited that it had been over practically before it started. He needs to get a grip and go slow so that they will both enjoy this. Glancing at his watch he wonders if they go past 6:00 and are caught in *flagrante delicto* if the guards will give them a little more time. He would kill anyone who tried to separate them at that point, thus incurring another penalty he supposed.

Twelve minutes left. Time to get these pants off Will and see if his bottom half is anywhere near as glorious as his top half. Hannibal puts his fingers underneath the elastic waistband of Will's pants and briefs and in one swift motion pulls them over Will's rump down to his bent knees. He manages to get the offending clothes under Will's knees and pull them and Will's shoes and socks off, all without losing physical contact with Will. Will is now gloriously naked and widens his knees further in invitation, clearly as ready as Hannibal. *God he has a beautiful ass*. Hannibal leans across Will's back teasing Will's sensitized skin with his furred chest. He slowly runs his hands down Will's back, down his ass, down the backs of his thighs, then brings his hands around the front of Will's thighs and up the insides of his thighs till they brushed his tight balls.

Will's entire body is quivering. When Hannibal leaned over his back Will had felt Hannibal's erection brushing against his ass, still separated by his pants unfortunately. *Why doesn't he take those fucking pants off*? Will thinks. Will's body is inflamed, consumed with need. He

needs Hannibal in him right now. "*Hannibal ... please*," Will says in a strangled, desperate voice.

Hannibal freezes for a second, not sure he heard right.

"Tell me what you want, Will," Hannibal asks softly.

While waiting for Will's answer Hannibal put three of his fingers in his mouth to wet them, then inserts his middle finger in Will's tight ass. Will cries out at the unexpectedness of it and clenches on Hannibal's finger.

"Please … Hannibal … need … you. Pleeaassee," he moans, panting and arching his back even further.

Hannibal feels himself getting, if possible, even harder than he already is. Will has just given him permission to continue. If Hannibal decided not to kill him, Will would be unable to delude himself that this was forced upon him, not when he's begging for it so beautifully. Will would have to live with the knowledge that he had begged Hannibal Lecter, aka the Chesapeake Ripper, to fuck him. It was just too perfect.

Hannibal wishes he had some lubricant as he can tell this is Will's first time with a man and he is extremely tight. He slids a second finger in Will's ass to try and stretch him a bit. Will arches his back and moans and starts rocking his body back and forth, moving against Hannibal's fingers. *He's not as stretched as I would like*, Hannibal thinks, *but we're running out of time*. *I'll have to use my own precum to lubricate myself to try and ease entry for both of us*. He can feel his own cock leaking even now. He needs to do this. He looks at his watch. Nine minutes. He'll go as slow as he can, but he's running out of time and he can feel his control slipping. He needs to be inside Will. But first he has to remove his own pants because the ridiculous things are pull-ups with no fly. He stands up with his thumbs under his waistband so he can shed his pants as quickly as he can … and that's when he sees Abel Gideon leaning against a tree several yards away with his arms crossed watching them like he has nothing better to do.

Chapter 8

Chapter Notes

This chapter is for you, Hanniwho, because you asked for it so beautifully.

Hannibal actually sees red for minute. With his extraordinary sense of smell and hearing how the hell did he not know the man was standing there watching them?

Abel seems to have read his mind and says, "You *were* a bit distracted so I'm not surprised you didn't know I was here. I have to admit, when I spotted you in the jungle chasing down Mr. Graham here and decided to follow you and watch the Chesapeake Ripper in action, this wasn't the kind of action I was expecting. I have to say, Dr. Lecter, I've met Mr. Graham on a couple of occasions when he interviewed me while I was incarcerated, and I never found him to be quite this … agreeable."

Hannibal is standing there breathing heavy with a very painful erection wondering how long it would take him to get to Gideon and snap his neck so he could get back to Will. Already he sees Will sitting on his haunches starting to look slightly confused. "Abel," Hannibal says with a slightly unsteady voice and a murderous stare, "you're being rude. This is a private matter between Will here and myself, and you should just move on and I'll forget I ever saw you. But if you decide to remain, you and you alone will be responsible for the consequences."

"Well, what about me," Matthew Brown says as he comes out from the other side of the trees, looking arrogant as most young killers do. "I got a major boner from watching the two of you. I'm with Abel here, when he comes to the hospital he's this shy guy that won't even talk to a person, and now you've got him panting and spreading his legs for you like a whore."

"Not quite how I would have put it, but I'm with Mr. Brown here," chimes in Abel. "Mr. Graham here can barely stand to make eye contact with anyone. How *did* you do it?"

Hannibal now had a killer on either side of him and he would have to eliminate them both in order to get back to Will, and he was furious. He had been so close. The arousal he's sporting is a painful reminder of how close he'd been. Will is now looking up at Hannibal with a slightly puzzled look on his face.

"Stay right where you are and don't move a muscle," Hannibal snaps at Will.

Abel circles around in front of Will and takes a good look at him, body coated in sweat, dark curls stuck to his face, lips red and swollen from Hannibal's kisses, eyes heavy lidded and

chest heaving. "I've never considered batting for the other team myself, but I must say that Mr. Graham does look deliciously fuckable right now."

"I wouldn't mind a go at him," Matthew adds with a wide grin on his face.

Now that Hannibal is out of Will's immediate proximity, Will's mind is starting to clear. Abel sees a frown appearing on Will's face, and then a widening of his eyes as the realization of what was just happening suddenly hits him. Abel, always being an extraordinarily astute man, quickly puts two and two together and says, "Dr. Lecter, you really are a dog. However, I'm afraid it appears the mood is spoiled."

Hannibal looks at Will and knows Abel is right. Although Hannibal still looks calm on the outside, his insides are roiling with heated rage. Hannibal needs to kill somebody…right now. Since an extremely painful erection was going to make that uncomfortable, he made one last attempt to reason with the two men.

"I'm asking you both to leave now or face the consequences." His voice is soft and deadly.

"But I haven't made a kill all day and was hoping to run into somebody," mock whines Matthew with a pouty look on his face. "Maybe you could let me kill Will here since it doesn't seem like he wants to bump uglies with you anymore."

Hannibal looked between Matthew and Abel with calm deliberation. Looking down at Will he could see that Will's mind was clearing and that he had lost his opportunity. In fact, the blush that was creeping up Will's face confirmed that he was coming out of it and was now realizing what had almost happened--what he himself had almost *allowed* to happen quite willingly.

Hannibal closed his eyes for just a second, regret washing over him. He had a feeling that sex between the two of them would have changed them both in ways they never dreamed of. Now he'd never know.

Will suddenly jumped up and grabbed his pants, which were close by, and quickly put them on as he looked between the three killers. Will never thought he would be thinking this, but thank god these other two killers arrived when they did or Hannibal would probably be fucking his brains out right now. Will shivered at the thought of how close he had come to just giving himself to Hannibal … to the Chesapeake-fucking-Ripper for god's sake! I mean, Will knew because of his empathy he could sometimes be unstable, but the way his own brain had turned against him like this was just terrifying. He had actually *wanted* Hannibal to fuck him with an intensity that he could still feel partially affecting him as evidenced by his state of arousal.

Will looked between the three men wondering who would make the first move. Will briefly wondered why Abel and Matthew would want to challenge a killer as strong and experienced as Hannibal in the first place. What in the world were they thinking?

Will decided to let his empathy work for him this time instead of against him. He closed his eyes and let the pendulum swing … (vroosh, vroosh) … and the answer came to him. Abel wasn't really interested in challenging Hannibal; he was just a naughty kid who liked stirring

the hornet's nest. Matthew was something else though. As a young up-and-comer he thought that by challenging and defeating a seasoned killer like Hannibal he could actually claim his kills and his reputation as his own. He'd now be the Chesapeake Ripper with a fully established reputation as a cold-blooded killer and feared by all. No climbing the ladder a step at a time; this would be a giant leap for him.

Will looked between the three men circling each other waiting for someone to make the first move, no doubt worried that if they struck first the third one would take advantage. Looking between them Hannibal looked especially savage right now with his shirt off and his hair no longer in neat order, a feral look on his face and … and … shit, evidence of his desire for Will still in plain view despite the pants. *Shit!*

Will looked at his watch. He could run at this point and try to hide until the Hunt was over. There was only 5 minutes left. He could do it, he could stay hidden for that long and survive. But then that would mean that the Chesapeake Ripper would go free, and after what Hannibal had just attempted to do to him, he could not have that, not when there was something he could do about it. All right then. He closed his eyes again and let the pendulum swing, sorting through all the killers he had profiled in the last couple of years, and then his mind settled on a particularly shrewd and deadly killer he had helped capture six months ago that had given him some of his worst nightmares ever. He welcomed him in now. *Come to papa*, he heard in his mind, which was a favorite catchphrase of this killer. He felt himself smile.

When he opened his eyes his whole demeanor was different. He was standing with his legs slightly spread for balance, arms hanging loose and relaxed, chin tucked toward his body watching the action before him in a calculating manner.

Abel looked over at him around this time and did a double take, not quite sure what he was seeing. Will smiled at him then, a smile that didn't reach his eyes, and it was enough to have Abel excuse himself and head for the tree line.

Will focused on the remaining two men. He needed to take down the strongest first so he'd have a better chance of defeating the one left standing, but if both were wounded it would make things much, much easier.

He had his plan in place. Only a few seconds had passed while all this had transpired so both Hannibal and Matthew were unaware of the change in Will and were each looking for an opening to strike the other. Will struck first. He leapt—right onto the back of Matthew Brown and bit into his neck. Hannibal instantly charged, as Will knew he would, and Will let go of Matthew. He had dug his teeth into Matthew's skin enough to cause pain but with no intent to rip flesh. Will had wanted to incite Hannibal to make a move, and he wanted Matthew 100% when Hannibal came at him.

Will dropped off Matthew's back and watched Hannibal and Matthew grappling with each other, trying to find an opening. Then Will saw what he was waiting for. Hannibal had his leg stance wide and slightly behind him as he was pushing Matthew, not letting the younger man gain the advantage. Will lifted his foot and slammed it as hard as he could into the side of Hannibal's left knee, dislocating it and tearing tissue and muscle. The affect was instantaneous: Hannibal screamed and dropped like a stone. Will was instantly on Matthew

before the man knew what had happened. He jumped onto Matthew's back and went for the jugular for real this time, ripping it out in one smooth motion. The entire area was suddenly painted red with Matthew's blood as his dying body thrashed around on the ground. Will's lower face was dripping blood onto his chest as he turned a feral smile toward the now wounded Hannibal Lecter.

Chapter 9

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Hannibal was lying on his back trying to control his pain. Even the slightest movement caused the pain level to spike to a 15 on a scale of 1 to 10. Will's actions had been so totally unexpected, so brilliantly planned, and now Matthew Brown was dead and he is lying on the ground with a debilitating injury. What a remarkable boy Will is.

Will approached Hannibal, blood dripping from his face onto his bare chest, keeping eye contact the entire time, which was so unlike him. Hannibal had never seen anything so beautiful in his life. Even Will's walk is different, more graceful, more predatory, and something seems to slither past his eyes. He stops next to Hannibal and smiles down at him the way a parent smiles down at a child; however, the smile never touches his eyes. He puts one leg over Hannibal and kneels down slowly so that he's straddling him, putting his ass right on Hannibal's groin—not his full weight, but enough pressure so that it feels slightly invasive, slightly erotic.

"I think killing should be … *intimate*, don't you?" he asks Hannibal in a voice that is lower than normal, huskier—seductive. Will is looking at Hannibal through his thick eyelashes as he places both of his hands on Hannibal's bare stomach and starts moving them upward in slow, circular movements. "Killing shouldn't be impersonal, not when two people are sharing such a uniquely powerful experience that will change both of them, but in such contrasting ways. I mean, one ceases to live while the other feels more alive than they ever have. It's quite a paradox.

To a man like Hannibal who revels in killing, words like this are like foreplay. God, he loves it when Will stares him in the eye like this, drenched in blood and talks about killing. Hannibal feels the words wash over him like a caress, and when Will said the word "*intimate*," Hannibal actually felt it shiver across his skin.

Hannibal knows Will is channeling yet another killer. He thinks back to the killers Will has profiled over the last year, and there had been a 29-year-old man of French-Italian decent that they said could charm Mother Teresa herself. But he was, in fact, a sexual predator who killed men, women, seniors, and children alike, but not before raping them and torturing them for days. He was as coldblooded as they come. This must be who Will is channeling now.

Will continues to touch Hannibal with soft, feathery touches alternating between palms and fingertips, and sometimes his nails. He playfully runs his fingers through Hannibal's chest hair, circles his nipples with his thumbs, all the while slowly moving up, up towards Hannibal's throat. He even licks his blood splattered lips provocatively, all the while holding eye contact and gauging Hannibal's reaction.

Despite the pain Hannibal's in, he's surprised to feel his body responding, something Will can't help but notice since his ass is sitting right on Hannibal's groin. Will gives him a seductive smile.

Hannibal brings up a hand to put on top of Will's thigh and Will taps his injured leg gently with his foot, just enough to jostle it and make the pain rear its ugly head. Hannibal drops his hand and hisses in a painful breath.

"No-no-no, no touching," Will tsks. "Only I get to touch," he says in that soft, deeply seductive voice. "You are under my control now, just as you wanted me under yours. How does it feel, Hannibal?" he purrs all the while touching, all the while holding eye contact and studying Hannibal's every facial nuance with interest.

Hannibal can't help but smile at how Will has totally flipped the situation around using his empathy. Yes, this is why Hannibal finds Will so incredibly fascinating. He could study this young man for years and barely scratch the surface, never get bored of him as he has with so many others previously.

However, it looks like this is all about to end shortly because Will is stretching his body up Hannibal's and now has his hands around his throat. Hannibal brings his own hands up to grab Will's wrists to stop him, but Will once again taps Hannibal's leg with his foot.

"No touching," he warns gently as Hannibal again drops his hands gasping in pain.

So far Will is just caressing his throat, thumbs circling his Adam's apple, fingers grazing the outline of his jaw. One hand goes behind his ear into his scalp, fingertips rubbing in a soothing manner that makes Hannibal relax slightly. But Hannibal knows, as sure as he knows himself, that Will is just waiting for the right moment to strike. And strike he does. Both of Will's hands are suddenly wrapped around Hannibal's throat in a crushing vise. Will's expression, which had been beautiful and angelic before, is now hard and cold. Hannibal brings his hands up once again to grab Will's wrists, but this time Will slams his foot into Hannibal's injured leg, making him almost black out from the pain. This is it then. He had brought Will to this island, became obsessed with him, and now it was going to be his undoing. How ironic. He can't breathe, feels the edges of his consciousness going black … and then …

Will suddenly jerks and pitches forward across Hannibal's chest, his head landing against his neck. He's not moving. Hannibal raises his head, gasping air into his oxygen-deprived lungs and sees Abel Gideon standing there with a tree branch roughly the size of a baseball bat that he has apparently just used to knock Will unconscious.

"I just wanted to apologize for my behavior earlier, Dr. Lecter. I thought maybe this would make amends and we could let bygones be bygones. No hard feelings?"

Hannibal closes his eyes for a second. *Not even close, Dr. Gideon*, he thinks. *Your time will come.* Hannibal opens his eyes and instead says in a slightly strained voice, "I appreciate your assistance, Abel. Now, do you think you could find the island doctor and have him bring a stretcher and maybe some morphine?"

At that moment the alarm on all of their watches went off simultaneously announcing the end of the Hunt. Hannibal dropped his head back on the ground and threw an arm over Will's back, waiting for management to send medical help. *Well played Will*, he thinks. *Well played indeed.*

Chapter End Notes

There are still three chapters left, my faithful readers, so please check back tomorrow around the same time.

Chapter 10

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will wakes groggy and disoriented with a massive headache. He brings a hand up and rubs his head, willing the pain to go away when he hears a male voice say "Hello, Will" that has him almost jumping out of his skin.

Jack Crawford is standing at the foot of his bed, and now that his vision has come into focus Will sees that he's in a hospital room.

"What…what happened?"

"Don't you remember?" Jack asked.

Will pauses for a minute, and then everything comes slamming back in crystal clarity: the Hunt, Bev, all the killing, Hannibal trying to molest him, and him trying to strangle Hannibal. *Shit!* Jack would be expecting full details of everything that happened. *Double shit!* How much should he tell him?

Will stalls by asking, "How did I get here?"

"Someone found you and Bev unconscious in the parking lot of *The Bang-Bang Bar* and called the police. You both had your identifications on you so the police called me."

Will draws in a relieved breath to learn that Beverly has survived as well. *Thank you, thank you, thank you*, he thinks. "So, what did Bev tell you?" he asks.

"Bev has told me her story, but I want to hear yours independent of hers."

That means Will's version would need to match whenever he was with Bev, but then he could get creative for some of the parts when Bev wasn't with him. Like when Hannibal almost fucked him. Jesus. He still couldn't get over that part.

So in the end he starts at the beginning and tells his story pretty much how it happened, only altering a couple key points. When it comes to the part where Hannibal had found him and tackled him to the ground, he just makes it seem like Hannibal had been trying to kill him when Matthew Brown and Abel Gideon arrived. Then he picks it up from there telling it pretty much as it happened, that Abel and Matthew had interrupted Hannibal trying to kill him and that Hannibal and Matthew had fought and that he had broken Dr. Lecter's knee joint and then tried to strangle Hannibal to death (which was bad enough) until someone hit him over the head (he didn't know who) and he had blacked out. As far as Will was concerned the FBI had nothing to gain by the parts Will left out, and it would just cause him embarrassment.

“So you have no idea where you were taken or who was behind this whole Hunt business?” Jack asked.

“Not a single clue,” Will admitted.

Jack nodded. “Bev said the same thing. The whole thing is just unbelievable."

“Were there any other survivors?” Will asked.

“Two others, including a New York cop that’s called me twice now wanting to talk to Bev. He says he wants to marry her, that she’s his dream girl, or something to that effect. I have no idea what that’s about. Anyway, we’ll talk more later. You get some rest now. The doctor says you’re bruised, battered and dehydrated and have a pretty good-sized lump on the back of your head, but nothing serious. They’ll probably release you tomorrow. I’ll check back with you later.” And he left, seemingly satisfied with Will’s version of events, but Will knew there would be lots more questions forthcoming.

Will got up after Jack left and went in search of Beverly. He wanted to see that she was all right for himself. He found her room two doors down from his and found her awake. She smiled when she saw him. Besides the bruises and split lip she had before, she now had some gashes on her face and had her arm in a sling. Will pointed at the arm and Beverly said, “I ran into Randall Tier, that kid who likes to pretend he’s an animal. Luckily for me he didn’t know I’m a black belt until it was too late.”

“You’re a black belt? I didn’t even know you’re a black belt,” Will said surprised. "They didn’t mention that at the Hunt as part of your profile."

“Well, it’s good to keep secrets; you never know when they’ll come in handy. Besides, I got my black belt when I was in high school,” she said. “It’s not the kind of thing you brag about. If I told guys I was an FBI agent *and* a black belt, I’d never get a date. Anyway, I was kicking his ass, and then that cop showed up, the one from New York, and he helped me finish him off. That’s the last time that creep’ll be attacking anyone, much less a defenseless woman,” she added.

“Defenseless?” Will snorted.

Beverly batted her lashes and put her hand to her chest. “Little ‘ol me? Why I wouldn’t hurt a fly.”

They both laughed.

“Seriously, Will, I was really worried about you. It seemed like Hannibal had you targeted that second day. Did you run into him?”

“Yeah, I ran into him and he tried to kill me and I tried to kill him, but it looks like we both survived to fight another day.”

Will tried to remember exactly what happened before he got hit over the head, but he was pretty sure Dr. Lecter was still alive. Alive and would probably come looking for him

sometime in the future. Great, something else to give him nightmares.

* * *

After Will was released from the hospital and went through a couple more rounds of questioning (mostly concentrating on what killers had been at the Hunt and who had survived to the best of his knowledge), the FBI gave him a three week leave of absence to recover from his ordeal.

Thank god his dogs were all fine. After he was reported missing Alana had taken it upon herself to take care of them.

Toward the end of the third week he went into town to stock up on groceries and whiskey, and pick up his mail. He arrived home and poured himself a drink and lit the fireplace. It was summertime but the evenings often turned damp and chilly. He sat down in front of the fireplace with his whisky and started leafing through his mail which consisted mostly of bills and solicitations. There was one large brown envelope postmarked Las Vegas with no return address. When he opened that one and pulled out another enveloped enclosed, he almost dropped the mail and his drink when he recognized the familiar fancy handwriting.

He put his whiskey and the rest of the mail down and looked at the envelope like it was a bomb about ready to explode. He considered tossing it into the fire without reading it. Should he call Jack and have the FBI go over it looking for clues first? No. No way. What if Lecter mentions something personal about what went on in the jungle?

He looked at the postmark on the outer envelope again. Las Vegas. He snorted. There was no way in hell Hannibal was in Vegas. He was using some sort of mail service to conceal where he was currently hiding, no doubt licking his wounds. He took a deep breath and opened the inner envelope.

"My dearest Will, it has been two weeks since we last saw each other and I hope you are well. I am currently on the mend after the rather substantial damage you did to my knee. It will take some time to fully heal and the doctors say physical therapy will be needed after that, but it should be as good as new in about six months. I'm in no hurry, dearest Will, for, as you know, I am a patient man.

As you have probably guessed, I'm not in the United States any longer. Since not only you but Ms. Katz survived the Hunt, my cover now is effectively blown. What a clever pair the two of you are. In fact, Will, Mr. Smith said that management found you so interesting that they were going to hold a spot open for you in next year's Hunt, though they said they weren't sure which side to put you on. How did it feel killing Charles Rutherford and Matthew Brown, and almost killing me?

I'm sure the FBI has been all over my home and office, which I find disagreeable. I will greatly miss the life I made for myself there. But it is my greatest wish that I see you again, Will, in the not too distant future. I find my compassion for you an inconvenience, but I also know that I won't be able to stay away from you any more than I could stay away from the treasures displayed at the Uffizi Museum in Florence. There are certain scenes from that second day that are stored now in my memory palace that I find myself reliving daily. I think

you know the scenes to which I refer, do you not? I only wish one specific memory hadn't come to such an ill-timed end. I would have loved that memory to have been … consummated. Do you keep the same memory in your own memory palace as well, I wonder?

In closing, Will, I wish you all the best. Please take care of yourself as I want you in fine form when we meet again, and perhaps we can make some new, more complete memories the next time around. Warmest regards, HL."

Will read the letter over a second time and tossed it in the fire, watching the edges curl up and burn. He downed his whiskey and poured a second one as he stared into the flames. Hannibal had to bring up that bit that Will still couldn't believe had almost happened between the two of them. As much as Will tried to excise that particular memory from his brain and pretend it never happened, he found he couldn't.

He took another drink. Hannibal must have sent the letter with the intent of putting him on edge by letting him know that he was alive and on the mend and would eventually be coming for him. The question now was did Hannibal want to fuck him, kill him, or eat him? Will suspected that the answer was all of the above.

Will smiled. Apparently there were a couple of things that management had failed to mention to Hannibal. Will had changed during those two days of the Hunt. He had been turned loose in the jungle and allowed—no, encouraged—to unleash his own inner killer instincts in order to survive. It looks like management didn't tell Hannibal that besides killing Charles Rutherford and Matthew Brown that Will had also killed three other hunters over the course of the Hunt, and he had enjoyed killing each one of them. This was also one of the key points that Will had failed to mention to Jack.

When management had showed the highlights film at the end of Day 1, Will wasn't really worried at first because it looked like they were just showcasing kills made by the hunters. However, when they then showed the kill that Will, Bev and Trisha had orchestrated, Will had been petrified that they might show one of the other two kills he had made later that day after he had gotten separated from Bev and Trisha. If that had happened, Bev and everyone watching the highlights would have seen him acting like all the other killers. Will had seen Hannibal notice his tenseness out of the corner of his eye, but Will suspected Hannibal just thought he was tense about reliving that kill with everybody watching.

Will had long suspected that he was capable of righteous violence because he was compassionate, and extreme acts of cruelty require a high level of empathy. When he had killed Garrett Jacob Hobbs he had enjoyed it but felt guilty because he enjoyed it. However, it took the Hunt to really bring out his baser instincts and show him that for every killer he himself killed, he was actually saving innocent lives in the long-run. And he could live with that.

What he found out during the Hunt was that when confronted face-to-face with a killer he could turn his empathy on and become that killer. It was funny watching the confused looks on a killer's face when they saw him emulating them, and that was often enough to get the upper hand. Yes, the three other kills he had made that weekend were quite … graphic.

When Hannibal had him pinned down and was smelling him and giving him that creepy if-I-were-blindfolded-I-could-pick-you-out-of-a-crowded-room speech, Hannibal had actually smelled blood on him from a kill earlier that day with that freaky nose of his.

Will had tried to use his empathy against Hannibal when he had him pinned down, but by the time he opened his empathy up to Hannibal, Hannibal wasn't in killer mode, he was in I've-decided-to-fuck-Will Graham-for-whatever-the-fuck-reason mode.

Will raised his whiskey glass in salute to the letter now reduced to ashes in the fireplace. Better bring your A-game next time we meet, Dr. Lecter, because I'll certainly be bringing mine," he said. Then he downed the rest of his whiskey and went to bed.

Chapter End Notes

Only two more chapters left, my faithful readers. As always, thanks for sticking with me.

Chapter 11

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will struggled to fall asleep that night, Hannibal's letter replaying over and over in his head, and when he finally drifts off the dream begins …

He's back in the jungle and when he looks down he's naked. He's suddenly afraid because he can feel eyes on him and they feel predatory. He slowly turns in a circle scanning the jungle looking for the danger and sees a set of glowing eyes and the swish of a tail. He starts running away from the danger but hears crashing behind him and knows that whatever it is is in pursuit of him. He tries to run faster but the thick jungle foliage is slowing him down. He can hear whatever it is getting closer to him. He chances a glance behind him and wishes he hadn't looked because there's a huge male lion right behind him. Unfortunately by glancing back he didn't see the tree root sticking out of the ground and he trips on it and lands hard on his stomach.

The lion is instantly on him. He closes his eyes and throws his arms over his head, steeling himself for the teeth that he knows will be closing on his neck or his arm or some other part of his body; however, after a few seconds of no teeth he opens his eyes and peeks behind him. The lion is just standing over him looking at him.

Will scrambles to his knees and tries to crawl away but the lion wraps his giant paws around his middle. Will puts his head down, not making eye contact hoping the lion has fed recently and is just playing with him the way a cat plays with a mouse. He hopes if he remains perfectly still the lion will grow bored and leave. He feels the lion's muzzle suddenly in his hair, loudly sniffing him, and then the lion licks the back of his neck with a large raspy tongue. Will's fear goes up a notch as he's sure the lion is tasting him to see if he'll be good to eat. He wished he was wearing his usual cologne that Dr. Lecter describes as "awful" which might make him smell and taste bad and drive the big cat away.

The lion licks the side of his neck and up his check. Then the lion is licking his naked back and working his way down his back like he's cleaning a cub. Will tries once again to crawl forward but the lion wraps a big paw around him and growls this time. Will remains immobile, head down, and the cat continues with his cleaning, tasting, licking … whatever the hell he's doing. When the lion has worked his way down Will's back and reaches his ass Will grits his teeth, wondering if the lion is thinking "rump roast."

The lion snuffles Will's ass and Will feels its hot breath going between his legs and caressing his balls. Will tenses as the lion licks first one butt check and then the other. But then things get really awkward when the lion's tongue goes under Will's ass and between his spread knees, tongue flicking out and hitting Will's balls and scraping back against the sensitive skin there with that raspy tongue. Will raises a hand to his mouth and bites on it to keep from crying out and is mortified that he is becoming aroused. Jesus, what kind of pervert is he to become aroused by a lion licking him that's probably getting ready to take a big bite out of him.

The lion crouches down, snuffling between Will's spread knees and poking Will with its nose, and its tongue comes out again, this time curling around over his balls and hitting the base of Will's cock, and Will goes down to his elbows putting both hands over his mouth to stifle the raw sound that almost escapes him. Will realizes his mistake the minute he does this, however, because now that he's on his elbows with his ass in the air he's even more exposed.

Will's cock is throbbing and his breathing is labored. If the lion licks him one more time he doesn't know what … JESUS FUCKING CHRIST!! This time the lion's big tongue sweeps out, curling in front of him and caressing most of Will's shaft. Will is trembling with need now, breathing ragged and he's fighting the urge to buck his hips because he doesn't think moving his ass in front of a lion's face is a good idea. God, he just wants to put his hand around his cock and quickly jerk himself off. This is agony.

The lion stands up and seems to take a step back, and Will blows out a sigh of relief, hopeful that he's getting ready to leave. Will remains still, listening for the sound of the lion's retreat. The lion seems to be doing some sort of stepping from one foot to the other, which Will doesn't understand, and then Will feels the lion trying to mount him. Will panics fully now and tries to crawl away, but the lion has his paws wrapped around Will's middle in a tight squeeze, and Will suddenly feels pressure on his ass as the lion humps him. Will grabs at the paws holding him and sees … that they're hands. Hands? Will sits back on his heels and twists his body so he can look behind him, and instead of a lion he's looking into the eyes of Hannibal Lecter. Hannibal is behind Will with his arms wrapped around Will pulling him against his body, and Will can tell Hannibal is also naked by the erection pressing provocatively against his ass.

Wait, where's the lion?" Will asks confused.

"I'm right here," Hannibal answers. "I am the apex predator on this island which makes me the king of the jungle."

To Will's dream self this makes perfect sense. "And I'm just the mongoose you want under the house when the snakes slither by. A mongoose isn't much of a meal for a lion."

"Oh, Will," Hannibal says, you're so much more than that now. When I watched you rip out Matthew Brown's throat and then come after me, I saw the young lion in you being born. You and I, we're alike. We march to the beat of a different drummer. No one can understand you like I can, just as no one can understand me like you can. We were meant to be together. If we can't be together, we'll end up tearing each other apart."

Hmm. Even in Will's dream state he can feel the truth in these words.

Then Hannibal is licking the side of Will's neck just like the lion was. Will is still aroused and this feels so good that Will leans back against Hannibal and tilts his head to the side so Hannibal has better access to his neck. Hannibal licks and runs his lips down the side of Will's neck. While still nuzzling his neck Hannibal brings one of his long-fingered hands up and caresses the column of Will's neck, moving his hand down to Will's chest, sliding his hand up and down, up and down, going lower with each downward stroke until he's grazing the fine line of hair below Will's navel. Will feels his stomach muscles flutter as Hannibal teases, fingertips going a little lower with each downward stroke until his fingers are brushing the

underside of Will's erection. Will arches his back and turns his face toward Hannibal who kisses him slow and long, hot and hard, all the while letting those fingers work their magic.

Will just wants to close his eyes and drown in the sensation. He can't remember the last time he felt this relaxed, this aroused, this cherished. Will loves intimacy, wishes he was in a relationship, but everyone seems to think he's either unstable or some sort of fragile little teacup. He was hoping something would happen between him and Alana, but she seemed set on keeping him in the friend zone. He had considered a relationship with Beverly since Bev seemed to like him and he actually does enjoy her company, but there's no heat between them, and deep down underneath the shyness, Will is a passionate man who needs to feel heat in a relationship. Kind of like the heat he's feeling right now. In fact, he's feels like he's going to spontaneously combust from the inside out at any minute.

Will rises on his knees and turns around so that he's facing Hannibal. He straddles him so that their chests are together and their cocks are touching. He wraps his arms around Hannibal and pulls him into a deep, lingering kiss. Will loves kissing, always has. He knows a lot of guys don't really see the point, but kissing is an unappreciated art form. With the right partner Will could kiss for hours. Kissing is a way to express yourself. A kiss is a build-up of the feelings and emotions coming from within and exploding into your own inner being. Kissing can be just as intimate as sex, and, oh my, Hannibal's mouth is carnality personified. It figures he kisses as well as he does everything else. If he fucks half as good as he kisses … Will shivers.

Will is losing himself in the pleasures of Hannibal's mouth and the feeling of need is so intense he's ready to crawl out of his own skin. They're both panting hard from the kissing and Will is ready to take it to the next level. While still kissing he starts pushing his body slowly and minutely up and down Hannibal's which causes their chests to rub together, and, coincidentally, causes their cocks to rub together. Hannibal's chest hair is creating an incredible feeling of friction on Will own chest. Hannibal hisses and throws his head back, and Will takes advantage and starts sucking and licking his neck, all the while rubbing up and down. Hannibal reaches down and grabs Will's ass with both hands and presses Will's groin harder against his own, increasing the pressure and friction.

Will's body feels inflamed and he needs something to quench the heat. He can tell Hannibal is as aroused as he is. Will is so close to the edge. He takes Hannibal's hand and tries to move it to his swollen cock. Just a few strokes should do it.

"Oh, no you don't," Hannibal whispers in Will's ear in a slightly breathless voice. "You're not coming your first time with me unless I'm inside you."

"Well, then…I'd suggest," Will pants, "that you hurry up…and get inside me."

"Do you know how many times, how many ways I'm going to make you come?," Hannibal whispers in his ear.

Will nearly loses it then and there, but Hannibal grabs him and turns him around and pushes him forward onto his hands and knees.

Hannibal grabs Will's thighs and pulls them apart, widening his stance. Will feels Hannibal rubbing his fingers up and down the cleft of his ass, and then a wet finger slips into him, pressing in, pressing downwards. Then a second finger follows and Will's hips arch helplessly up and he moans. God, he needs this so bad. It's been so long since he's been intimate with anyone.

"Just a little while longer, Will. I want to be sure you can take me."

Hannibal adds a third finger and Will starts making sounds of discomfort. It feels too full, too tight.

"I'm sorry, Will, but this is necessary. If you can't handle this you'll never be able to handle me. And you do want me inside you, Will, don't you?"

"Yes," Will gasps, "god yes."

Will starts squirming on Hannibal's fingers. "Please, Hannibal, stop teasing."

Hannibal leans forward and Will feels his breath on his ear. "Tell me, Will. Tell me what you need."

"I need you to fuck me like I'm not some fragile little teacup and so that the only thing I'm capable of thinking of is you and me right here, right now."

And then Will feels Hannibal sit up and lose contact with him, and for a second he's afraid he's said the wrong thing. When he looks back over his shoulder he draws in a deep, shuddering breath. Hannibal is looking down, his hair falling in front of his eyes, and he's rubbing precum all over his own cock. Will's eyes are transfixed watching Hannibal touching himself, gliding his hands slowly up and down. Hannibal's body is sweaty and glistens gold and tawny in the sunlight. The muscles in his arms move with his motions. Will suddenly sees an image of the lion inside his head. Will is watching, mesmerized. Then Hannibal looks up and catches him watching, and smiles a slow, sexy smile that is so seductive and heated that it nearly fries Will's brain circuits. It's a look that promises things to come.

Hannibal comes back behind Will and he feels Hannibal rubbing the tip of his cock up and down his cleft with his slippery precum. Will's a little nervous now because from what he just saw, Hannibal is by no means a small man. But before Will can let doubt overtake him he feels Hannibal grabbing his hips and spreading his cheeks, and the thick head of Hannibal's cock is nudging against his opening, pushing slowly inside.

Will gasps and tries to adjust, wiggling, trying to accept, but Hannibal is big and he's so tight.

"Easy, Will. Try to relax," Hannibal says in a soft, soothing voice.

Will tries, but he can't. Despite his best efforts to relax, every time Hannibal tries to move forward his muscles bear down on him, making it difficult for him to gain any ground.

"You're killing me, Will. You have to relax and let me in."

“I’m trying,” Will grits out, clearly in discomfort.

After another minute of barely making any headway and both he and Will panting and covered in sweat, Hannibal muffles a curse in Lithuanian and fists one hand in Will’s hair close to the scalp and tugs his head backwards hard. He then leans forward and bites Will on his shoulder and drives himself into Will at the same time, penetrating him so completely and so suddenly that Will screams and the sky is suddenly alive with the sound of birds taking to the air.

Hannibal kisses and licks the spot he just bit, keeping his body still, buried to the hilt in Will, waiting for him to adjust to him. It’s taking every ounce of self-control he has not to start moving. He waits for a signal from Will.

Will is trembling and breathing hard, dealing with the pain. When Hannibal pushed into him it was a searing, white hot pain. Now he’s frozen in place, afraid to move. But slowly, gradually Will feels his muscles start to relax, his body adjusting, and the burning sensation is starting to abate and turn into another kind of heat. He’s grateful Hannibal is giving him this time. Pain and pleasure are beginning to blur together. He feels the need starting to build again and arches his back and presses his ass more firmly against Hannibal’s groin.

Hannibal feels the signal from Will and starts to move with a slow, erotic grind of his hips.

Hannibal’s slow movements abrade Will’s insides and the friction is causing the pressure to build. The feeling is exquisite.

Hannibal watches Will’s reaction and shifts his angle of penetration until he sees Will jerk in surprise. He knows he’s found the right spot now.

Will starts to squirm and make needy little sounds letting Hannibal know it’s time to pick up the pace.

Hannibal increases his hold on Will’s hips, gripping so hard he’ll have bruises tomorrow, but Will said he didn’t want to be treated like a fragile little teacup. Hannibal sets a demanding pace, never taking his eyes off Will. “Will is so beautiful like this,” Hannibal thinks. “His skin is flushed and covered in sweat, his head is thrown back, and he’s making the most wonderful sounds of pleasure and need. And I’m the one who’s causing this. I’m the only one that can. No one knows Will like I do, and no one ever will.”

Will has never felt more alive than he does right here, right now in the middle of the jungle, outdoors with the sun and the scented jungle breeze blowing on his naked skin and the biggest, baddest predator on the island fucking him, branding him, laying claim to him. He feels euphoric and never wants this to end. He can feel all the muscles in his body tightening as Hannibal is moving him toward climax.

Hannibal let’s go of Will’s hips and reaches around him in a kind of a hug, finding Will’s cock and wrapping his hand around it so that every time he moves in and out of Will, Will’s own cock slides in and out of his hand. Hannibal has his nose pressed up against Will’s back and is inhaling deeply, all the while pounding his hips against Will’s ass. The pheromones

that Will secretes during sex is like an aphrodisiac and Hannibal has never been so aroused.

"I've been so lonely for so long," Will thinks. "I never want this feeling to end."

Hannibal is making a noise deep in his throat that is so raw and animal and sexual that the sound alone is driving Will over the edge. Will feels Hannibal tighten his grip on his cock slightly, causing more friction, and knows Hannibal is close as well. Will hears Hannibal whisper, "You're mine Will. We were made for each other and I'm never letting you go," and then Will feels his body tighten like a bowstring and he feels himself starting to pulsate around Hannibal, and then he has the most explosive, most incredible, most mind blowing, earth shattering climax of his entire life and he screams out "HAN-NI-…

… BAL!" And he jerks awake sweating and shaking with his sheets twisted around him and his heart slamming against his rib cage and his hand around his cock and his boxers nowhere in sight, and there's semen on his hand and abdomen and sheets. And as he lays there waiting for his heartbeat to slow, still partially between the realms of dreaming and waking, he throws his arm out to the side of the bed as if expecting someone to be there. Of course there's no one there. The worst part of the dream is he's just had an intimate moment beyond anything he's ever experienced in his entire existence, but here he is all by himself in his isolated little house, and he's never felt more alone in his life.

Chapter End Notes

My feeling is every time Will empathizes with someone, gets in their head, he can't help but keep some sort of lingering effect. With the near miss with Hannibal in the jungle when Will empathized with him, he's bound to have residual feelings with regard to that mindset whether he wants to or not. I think Will's life just got a little more complicated, don't you?

Only one chapter left, my faithful readers, and I promise that the mysterious management will be touched upon. So join me tomorrow night same time, same place for the final chapter. Bye for now.

Chapter 12

Chapter Notes

And now for the final chapter of "The Hunt." I hope you enjoy.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

EPILOGUE

Mason Verger was sitting in a private wing of his mansion sipping a martini and watching the full footage from this year's Hunt. *My, my*, he thought, *this had been quite a bloody and spectacularly good Hunt*.

The wing that houses Mason's private theater can only be accessed by a keycard, and he has the only card. The only other person he ever allows in here is Cordell, his assistant and personal bodyguard, but then Cordell shares some of Mason's rather unique tastes in entertainment. This was Mason's special place. In addition to his private theater he has a state-of-the-art digital media studio and a walk-in vault hidden behind a sliding bookcase that holds all of Mason's most treasured possessions. In the vault he has stolen artifacts that he's purchased on the black market, blackmail materials his father had gathered and that Mason has since added to, his father's journals about swine breeding and traits of all the different lines he'd observed, and then there's Mason's special collection of films and DVD's. Mason has a collection of rare and one-of-a-kind films collected over the years. He has some snuff movies the FBI would love to get their hands on, some porn that goes above and beyond what you can find in this country and doesn't have a problem with shedding a little blood every now and again, and then there's Mason's cherished collection of Hunt DVDs.

Mason started the Hunt six years ago when he briefly entertained the idea of becoming a killer himself but knew he didn't have the patience or the disposition to be a good one. Of course he could have had Cordell do it for him, but that wouldn't have been any fun. Oh, but then it had come to him: what about hosting an event on a remote island where killers came at his invitation seduced by live human prey and five-star hotel accommodations, and Mason could then watch and live these kills vicariously knowing he had arranged them? It was too perfect.

So he had done his research and purchased a small island dirt cheap using a third-party buyer and a fake name off the coast of Cuba that nobody wanted, and contracted Cuban workers who worked for peanuts and were paid in cash to build a sort of hotel on it, complete with luxury bedrooms and a grand ballroom for his paying guests, and then added cells and shower blocks for the "other guests." Labor was cheap and the whole thing had cost next to nothing. The camera set-up had been pretty pricey, but Mason wanted high tech, state-of-the-art cameras so that he could get clear footage. Even after the disappointing attendance at the first Hunt, the money brought in from the Hunt had paid back all of his out-of-pocket costs in

only four years. Nowadays two-thirds of the money he brings in is clear profit, so he's actually making a profit from his hobby. Papa would be so proud of him.

For the event itself Mason employs men from Sardinia he has long associations with and trusts to capture and bring in the chosen participants, and then afterwards to act as guards throughout the event. They are paid extremely well for their services and their silence. "Mr. Smith" is also from Sardinia and manages everything. A housekeeper, a doctor, a cook, a sous chef, and a few waiters, usually relatives of his Sardinian friends, most definitely from outside the U.S., round out the staff necessary to keep things running smoothly.

Mason has only been on the island one time, and that was to inspect the site once all the building was done and the camera installation was complete. Mason has muddied the water and covered his tracks well so that there is no way he can ever be connected with the Hunt. Even the hunters don't know who "management" is. If they have a question or a concern, they speak with Mr. Smith who then relays it to him. It is his best kept secret. The only person in this country who knows anything is his faithful Cordell, and Cordell would never tell a soul. Cordell had actually asked if he could participate in the Hunt two years ago, and Mason, feeling magnanimous, had agreed. Cordell had had the best time. He even brought Mason a souvenir back that was nice and wet, something he could feel and smell while he watched Cordell in the highlight reel. No, Cordell would never tell.

The first year Mason held the Hunt he had had his Sardinian friends, who have contacts all over the world in certain unorthodox circles, discretely put the word out to any known killers about the upcoming Hunt and how to find the invitation. That first year hadn't drawn much participation, probably because people thought it was an FBI sting, but after that first year as word gradually spread throughout the killer network, the number of participants had grown every year. Now he simply has to post his ad in the "Personals" section of *Tattlecrim.com* on the same day every year, and it has gotten to the point where he actually has to turn people away once he hit the limit of 30 hunters in order to keep things manageable. Mind you, over 50% of the hunters had gotten killed this year, so he was going to have to drum up some new business for next year's Hunt. But last year the hunters had complained that the participants weren't challenging enough, too easily killed, too quickly killed, and it had chaffed Mason a bit, so maybe he had gone just a bit overboard this year. *Bet they won't be complaining this year … that is the ones still left alive*, Mason thought.

Mason loved coming down and watching footage of the Hunt with a large martini made with Margot's tears. After the first Hunt he had gotten the idea of the highlight reels. Since he already had cameras placed all over the island filming the action, he just needed someone who could edit the clips. So he paid to have Cordell go to digital film editing school, and now as they watch the Hunt live through encrypted feeds from the island, Mason will note his favorite kills and Cordell can piece them together rather quickly so they can be shown at the Day 1 after-event dinner.

He and Cordell would watch the full footage of the Hunts later on and critique them the way other men critique football games and individual players. Of course they both had their favorite killers that they rooted for.

This year had been uniquely entertaining on many levels. First of all, this had been the bloodiest Hunt ever with the highest death count. He had lost a record number of hunters.

Secondly, for the first time in the Hunt's history there had actually been participant survivors. Well that was certainly going to be awkward for the surviving hunters, especially considering two of the survivors were FBI and one was a cop. Guess they'll be looking for greener pastures in another country. Teaches them a lesson though: If they don't kill them all they have to deal with the consequences of it. Mason didn't really care if there were survivors or not as it can never come back and bite him in the ass, but it increases the stakes for the hunters, adds to the risk. They knew that was part of the deal coming in.

And then thirdly, there was that whole bit between his favorite hunter, Hannibal Lecter, and that geeky schoolboy-looking Will Graham, the same Will Graham that Hannibal himself had entered and then had almost been killed by.

He hadn't been impressed with Will Graham when he saw Hannibal's entry of him, but, oh my, what an interesting boy he turned out to be. He was quite the killer himself. Mason had started to put one of Will's individual kills in the highlight film, but then had changed his mind. Will was an unexpected wildcard who made things much more interesting, so he decided to withhold that particular clip, let the action ride, and let the chips fall where they may. It was the right call. Even Hannibal had gotten blindsided by it.

And speaking of Hannibal, there was that whole other bit at the end of Day 2 where Hannibal had shown that blood-lust wasn't the only kind of lust he felt and had nearly managed to fuck Will Graham every which way he could be fucked. That bit had steamed up Mason's glasses nicely and put many of his coveted porn movies to shame.

When Abel Gideon and Matthew Brown had interrupted what was almost a done deal with Will Graham on his knees eagerly waiting to take it up the ass, Mason had screamed in frustration and taken his papa's knife and cut his theater screen to shreds. It had taken a week to get a replacement screen. He could only imagine what Hannibal was feeling.

But Mason wasn't about to let a little setback like that spoil his fun. He was already planning for next year's Hunt. Mason knew Hannibal was in Europe licking his wounds and was expected to make a full recovery. In the meantime, one of Mason's Romanian contacts had hacked the FBI's network and gotten him a copy of Will Graham's official report of events of the Hunt, and it showed that Will had left out quite a few pertinent details. What a naughty boy that Will Graham was.

Mason was going to make sure that both Hannibal Lecter and Will Graham were tossed back into each other's orbits in next year's Hunt, whether they wanted to be or not. There was something unusual going on between those two, some connection, and Mason wanted to study it further. Maybe Hannibal would finish what he started and actually consummate this strange relationship he seemed to have with Will Graham, or maybe Will Graham would finish what he started and Hannibal would end up dead … or vice-versa. Whatever happened, Mason would have it all on disk in glorious Technicolor to watch over and over again whenever he got bored.

Mason took a drink of his martini and smiled. The possibilities were endless. *Oh, there were some good, funny times to look forward to*, he thought. Then he hit the play button on the remote control to start the DVD again.

Chapter End Notes

So, in the end, Will, Hannibal, Bev and that rascal Abel Gideon are all alive, and although there was smut, Will is still a virgin, so to speak. This is my design.

If you have enjoyed this story, don't forget to hit the kudos button on the way out. Also, I've just begun posting chapters to "The Hunt-2" starting 4-3-16. I'll be trying to post a chapter a night until it's done, so please, if you liked this story find "2" and join us for the continuing saga. Thank you all again.

This is EvilAdmin, out!

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!